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MOJO '60s

CELEBRATING ROCK'S DECADE OF COOL

Plus

THE STONES
DONOVAN
RONNIE SPECTOR
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THE MONKEES

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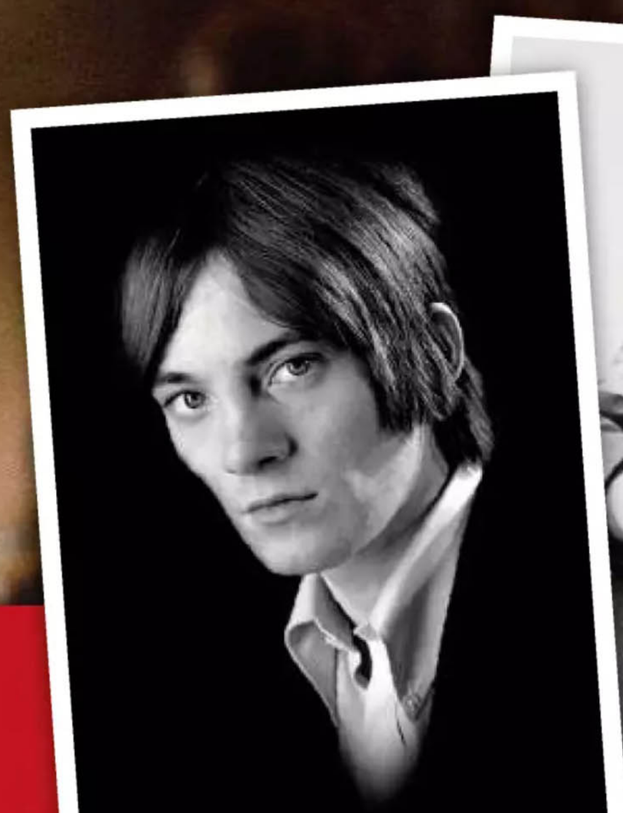

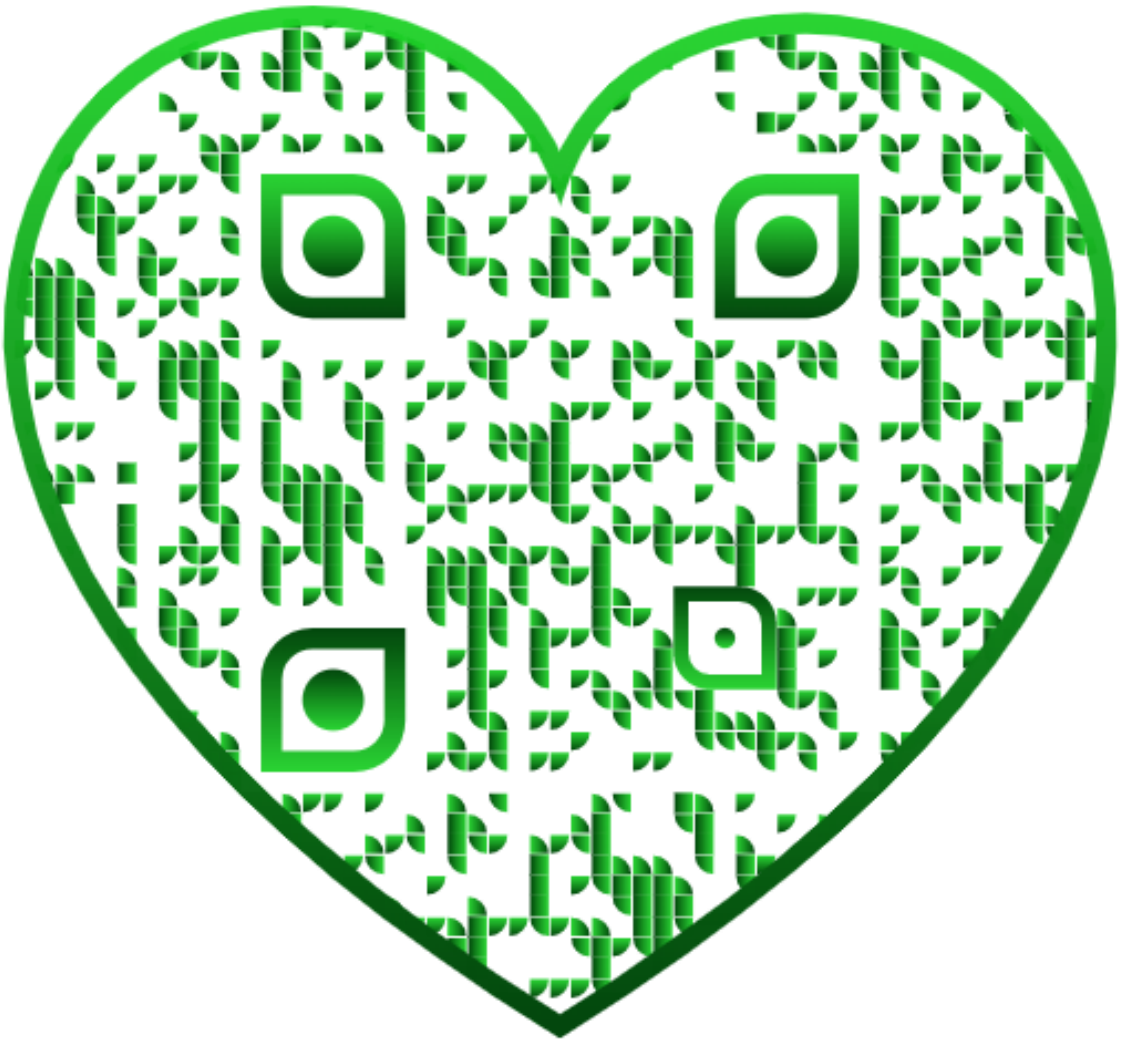

A film by Don Cheadle

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MOJO '60s

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King of the blues: Chester 'Howlin' Wolf' Burnett.

The Letter

THE YEAR 1966 WAS A watershed for music. The Stones released *Aftermath*, The Beatles delivered *Revolver* and The Beach Boys stunned listeners with *Pet Sounds*.

Away from all this, a 19-year-old South Londoner was devouring everything he saw and heard around him in a bid to arrive at his own musical vision. Since his death, much has been written about David Bowie, but few have truly delved into his crucial formative period. Our 20-page cover feature does just that, and explores Bowie's early days and the moment when he reached for the outer limits.

Also in this issue we bring you in-depth pieces on Howlin' Wolf, The Who, The Monkees – and all points in between – and celebrate the life of a man who changed the way we hear the world: Sir George Martin.

As this issue went to press we were deeply saddened to hear of the passing of MOJO's US contributing editor Ben Edmonds. You can read a fine piece written by him on the MC5 starting on page 56. Ben was a man who dedicated his life to music and, as a result, we salute him by dedicating this issue to him. This one's for you, Ben…

PHIL ALEXANDER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

56

98

114

What Goes On!

06 HIP HAPPENINGS
Ronnie Spector hits '60s London, Donovan jams with Jeff Beck, Leslie West recalls The Vagrants.

Features

24 GEORGE MARTIN
We bid adieu to The Beatles' producer and revisit the making of *Sgt. Pepper.*

28 THE ROLLING STONES
Celebrating Terry O'Neill's iconic images of the Fab Five.

34 THE MONKEES
How their cult movie Head inspired rock's next generation.

44 HOWLIN' WOLF
The story of the Mississippi blues titan.

56 MC5
Detroit proto-punks vs. NYC crazies.

78 DAVID BOWIE
The future Thin White Duke's roller-coaster ride through the '60s.

98 THE WHO
A year in the life of West London's greatest Pop Art hooligans.

108 THE BAND
Images of Americana's godfathers.

114 ETTA JAMES
The life and times of the queen of soul.

120 TROPICALIA
How rock revolutionised '60s Brazil.

Plus!

68 PIN-UPS
Decorate your den with '60s icons.

128 X-WORD COMPETITION
Win a goody bag of Beatles swag.

130 BEFORE THEY WERE FAMOUS
Abba's Agnetha Fältskog.

MOJO '60s
CELEBRATING ROCK'S DECADE OF COOL

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The Big Picture

Smiling Phases: Traffic, with Wood (second right) outside their cottage HQ at Aston Tirrold, 1967; and, below, Wood takes a break in his Cromwell Road flat.

Wild Wood

A new book, vinyl LP and CD set celebrates Traffic's late, great Chris Wood. By Mark Blake.

Traffic's co-founder and woodwind player Chris Wood was one of rock's most self-effacing and unsung musicians. Sadly, Wood's lifestyle caught up with him and he died of pneumonia in July 1983. At the time, he was working to complete a long-overdue solo album, which has now been anthologised, together with a 200-page hardback book and four CDs of music spanning his entire career, in a deluxe set entitled *Evening Blue*.

Wood was once described by his former Traffic bandmate Steve Winwood as "instrumental in the character of Traffic's sound". His keyboards, sax and flute playing were an integral part of Traffic from their 1967 *Mr Fantasy* debut until '74's *Where The Eagle Flies*. It was Wood who also turned his bandmates on to the traditional folk song John Barleycorn, which they then turned into John Barleycorn Must Die, the title track of their fourth album.

During his tenure with Traffic, Wood played sessions for Jimi Hendrix and Free, and later went on to collaborate with artists including John Martyn, Dr John and The Wailers' keyboard player Tyrone Downie.

Evening Blue includes a hardback book containing over 400 images, many previously unpublished; CDs covering Wood's work with Traffic, solo and with others; and his solo album, *Vulcan*, started in October '78. The *Vulcan* tapes were lost after Wood's death, but were rediscovered unexpectedly in 2013. A vinyl LP version is included in *Evening Blue* with the album's nine songs as originally sequenced by Wood.

"I'd like to think Chris would be quietly proud of this," says Wood's sister Steph, who has helped curate the project. "There is such a cross section of music here, because Chris never knew boundaries in music."

A first edition of Evening Blue, limited to 1,000 numbered copies, will be issued on June 24. For more information and to pre-order, go to www.hiddenmasters.net

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Back To The Future

Feed Your Head

The V&A's '60s counter-culture exhibition leaves no moonstone unturned to deliver a mind-expanding trip through the decade. By Anna Wood.

Splinters from Jimi Hendrix's guitar, Grace Slick's kaftan, a piece of moon rock borrowed from NASA and a replica of the very first computer mouse are just some of the artefacts in the Victoria & Albert Museum's You Say You Want A Revolution? exhibition, opening in September.

The show, put together by the same team behind the 2013 David Bowie Is exhibition, will demonstrate how, between 1966 and 1970, politics, fashion, art and technology were all undergoing a period of revolution – and how music was at the heart of that revolution.

"We're opening with the line, 'Turn off your mind, relax and float down stream', because this will be a trip into the ideas and philosophies and music and hopes and dreams from that period," says curator Victoria Broackes. "Not like a drugs trip," she clarifies.

The centrepiece will be a celebration of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, including handwritten lyrics for Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds, plus George Harrison's sitar, 1967 diary and the suit he wore on the LP cover.

The exhibition will include several distinct zones. There'll be a recreated, fully 'swinging' Carnaby Street with invitations to various '60s 'happenings', an Ossie Clarke costume designed for Mick Jagger, a Twiggy dress, artwork by Yoko Ono and Bridget Riley, and photographs by David Bailey and Terry O'Neill.

Spirit of the age: (left) a Warhol-inspired Souper Dress; and (clockwise from above) anti-Vietnam War demo, 1967; UFO club poster 1967; and Alan Aldridge's illustration for The Beatles' Revolution, 1968.

"It's a trip into the ideas, music, hopes and dreams of that period."

An "immersive depiction" of the famous UFO club will include liquid light shows, designs by Hapshash & The Coloured Coat and Stanley Mouse, copies of the early counter-cultural newspaper The Long Hair Times and music by Pink Floyd, Cream and Jefferson Airplane.

Counter-culture, civil unrest, information technologies and alternative communities are also explored with original photographs, posters and film footage, including a look at how permaculture communities on the West Coast were living alongside the computer pioneers of the nascent Silicon Valley, as epitomised by The Whole Earth Catalog, once described by Steve Jobs as "Google in paperback form".

Everything will converge in a double-height gallery space and will feature early festival footage from Monterey, Woodstock, Glastonbury, the Isle Of Wight and Newport Jazz. Among the stranger items are Woodstock co-organiser Michael Lang's desk, where he wrote to Apple Records to ask if John Lennon would perform at the festival (the answer was yes, but the reply got lost in the post).

The exhibition even goes back further than the '60s and includes artefacts which inspired that decade's pioneers, including Woody Guthrie's guitar (emblazoned with "This Machine Kills Fascists") and his handwritten new year's 'rulin's for 1944 ("shine shoes", "stay glad", "wake up and fight") and, unexpectedly but rather brilliantly, the original copy of Thomas More's Utopia from 1516.

The curators also plan to reach into the future, with reflections on how we all might apply Summer of Love-style optimism and the lessons learned in the '60s to 2016 and beyond, in the search for "a new and better tomorrow".

You Say You Want A Revolution? Records And Rebels

Kerry Taylor auctions, Bernie Boston/The Washington Post/Getty, Victoria & Albert Museum, Iconic Images/Alan Aldridge

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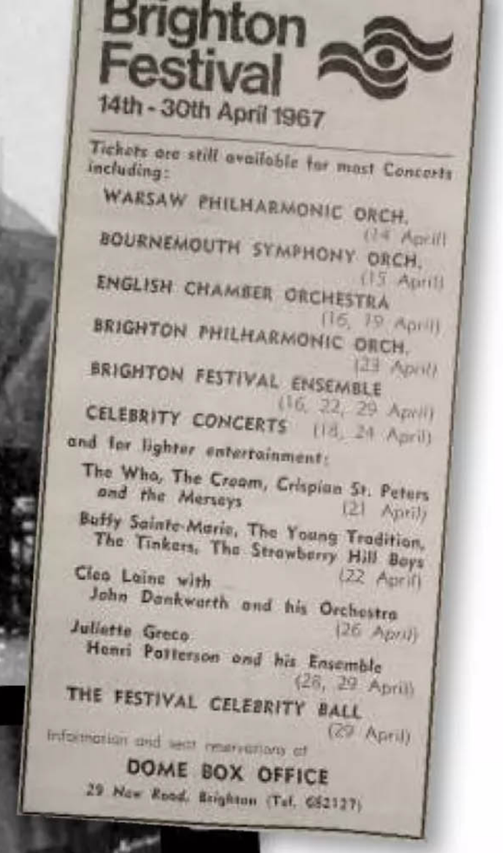

Rave on!: (from top) the Palace Pier, The Who, a fashion show, Clapton and John Entwistle backstage, the students' movie camera.

Brighton Rocks!

Unseen footage of Cream and The Who? Sculptures by Damon Albarn's dad? Mod stage invasions? Welcome to the extraordinary 'lost' film of the inaugural 1967 Brighton Festival… By Andy Neill.

"We all thought the film was a lost thing," says Ian Beck of the footage he and fellow Brighton Art College student Tim Grimes shot of the town's first-ever festival in April and May 1967. "But last year Tim was cleaning out his mother's attic and, lo and behold, he came across several rusty tins with the original untouched negatives. We had them digitised – and there it was."

The remarkable discovery has come just in time for the annual Brighton Festival's landmark 50th celebration, during which the black-and-white film is due to be screened. The footage captures the imaginative melange of attractions held over that spring fortnight, including 'Inter-67', a 10-foot high "environmental structure" in Regency Square, designed by Keith Albarn (father of Blur's Damon) and consisting of plastic globes in red, yellow, black and blue; "concrete poetry" made of three-foot high wooden letters in the Royal Pavilion grounds; and kinetic art on West Pier with performance artist Bruce Lacey and his Humanoid Robots.

The icing on the cake, though, is previously unseen film of The Who, Cream and Geno Washington at the 'Pop Concert', held in the Brighton Dome on April 21. According to Evening Argus reviewer Peter Robinson, the show was "the biggest fiasco" of the festival. He was impressed by Cream, but less so by The Who: "The audience sat bored and unmoved as Pete Townshend made pathetic attempts to generate even a little of the guitar excitement created by Clapton… A cacophony of distorted sound in the guise of pop music ended abruptly when Keith Moon, after kicking over his drums, made his exit by smashing in the skin of his bass drum with a cymbal."

Moon's auto-destruction is seen in the film, as are backstage shots of Cream (with Clapton in full Hendrix perm mode), and Townshend arriving at the gig in his black Lincoln Continental.

The inaugural Brighton Arts Festival Ball, held at the Hotel Metropole, is also well-documented, with footage of compere Radio London DJ Dave Cash, Paul Jones, The Move, Geno Washington And The Ram Jam Band and Jimmy James And The Vagabonds, whose stage is invaded by a gang of fervent Brighton mods. The marathon all-night event, billed as the "biggest-ever rave up to hit the South Coast", was a financially dicey proposition for the College of Technology Students' Union. "We admit it's a gamble," 21-year-old pharmacy student Harvey Goldsmith told the Argus. "The overheads are fantastic. This is why the tickets have to be 30 shillings. I know it's expensive but I'm optimistic the ball will be a success."

Luckily for Harvey, it was, with over 8,000 attendees getting fluorescent balloons, films and a four-course buffet supper for their 30 bob. Harvey Goldsmith would continue his successful promoting adventures, of course, with everyone from U2 to Bruce Springsteen, and stadium concerts including Live Aid.

Elsewhere, footage of Johnny Dankworth and Cleo Laine, Juliette Greco, Georgie Fame with the Harry South Big Band and the festival's concluding event, Yehudi Menuhin playing violin at The Destruction Of Hideous Objects bonfire on Fishmarket Beach, attests to the eclecticism of the event.

Andrew Comben, Chief Executive at Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival, says: "I've long been fascinated by the first-ever festival, and seeing this footage really brought it alive. For this, our 50th year, we wanted to reflect on the original intentions of the festival, which from the start were about celebrating international culture, the new, and the avant-garde. With pioneering artist and musician Laurie Anderson at the helm as Guest Director we hope to do just that."

The festival was billed as the "biggest ever rave-up to hit the South Coast."

The Brighton Festival 2016 starts on May 7. More info at www.brightonfestival.org

Cambridge Folk Festival

FIRST NAMES ANNOUNCED

Christy Moore ✷ ✷ Gogol Bordello ✷ ✷ Imelda May
✷ Glen Hansard ✷ ✷ ✷ ✷ Mary Chapin Carpenter ✷
✷ ✷ Afro Celt Sound System ✷ ✷ ✷ Kate Rusby ✷ ✷
✷ ✷ ✷ Charles Bradley & His Extraordinaires ✷ ✷ ✷
Eliza Carthy & The Wayward Band ✷ ✷ Jon Boden
✷ Songs of Separation ✷ ✷ ✷ Sam Lee & Friends ✷
Michael McGoldrick Band ✷ Blazin' Fiddles ✷ Solas
Edward II ✷ ✷ Le Vent du Nord ✷ ✷ Duncan Chisholm
✷ ✷ Kíla ✷ ✷ Breabach ✷ ✷ ✷ Hot 8 Brass Band ✷ ✷
Cash Box Kings ✷ This Is The Kit ✷ Stick In The Wheel
Seafret ✷ ✷ The Mike + Ruthy Band ✷ ✷ Will Varley
Lisa O'Neill ✷ ✷ Brian McNeill ✷ ✷ The Dovetail Trio
Ímar ✷ Sam Kelly & The Lost Boys ✷ Flats & Sharps

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What GOES ON!

Under The Spotlight

Ronnie Spector

When she arrived in London in January 1964, the capital couldn't get enough of The Ronettes' fun-loving singer and her bandmates. Here she recalls performing to Marilyn Monroe, teaching The Beatles the Twist and jamming with Jimi. Interview by Lois Wilson.

Your new album, *English Heart*, pays tribute to the British Invasion. Did recording it bring back memories of your first visit to the UK in January 1964?
Oh yes, we'd never been outside the States before and when we arrived at Heathrow, we were greeted by all these screaming fans, they were calling out our names, they had banners, they wanted our autographs and up to that point we hadn't realised we were popular in the UK. We'd been playing 'sock hops' in the US, we had fans, but nothing like this. No one had waited for us at an airport before, and it was the moment we knew we had made it. We went on TV shows and they made our dresses for us and did our faces and we got to keep the dresses. That didn't happen in the States, either.

Four years earlier, when the '60s begun, you were at the Manhattan nightclub the Peppermint Lounge, which gave birth to the Twist.
I remember the Peppermint Lounge so well. It's really where it all started for us. We'd been doing bar mitzvahs, we'd sung in Greenwich Village coffee houses, in the window of the Hawaii Kai restaurant, and we used to go to the Peppermint Lounge. We already had our look – we wore tight dresses, had our hair up in beehives, had our Cleopatra eye make-up, so we looked different and stood out. One night we were standing in line with everyone else, and the manager mistook us for the dancers he was expecting and said, "Girls, girls, you are late, come on!", and we walked past everyone straight into the club. The house band, Joey Dee And The Starlighters, were already on stage playing. Joey called us up there, one of the Starlighters handed me a mike and told me to start singing Ray Charles' What'd I Say.

What happened then?
I did and the three of us were dancing and the place was going nuts. We knew then we were going to be singers, and every night we got up and sang and danced with Joey. We'd be looking down from the stage and Jackie O would be in the audience watching, or Marilyn Monroe, one night Judy Garland, that was insane. I was almost foaming at the mouth when I saw Judy Garland, but of course I had to keep my composure and continue performing.

You had your first hit with 1963's Be My Baby – how did you celebrate?
We were on tour, in a hotel in Wildwood, New Jersey. We were watching American Bandstand and we heard our record start up and Dick Clark said, "This is going to be the record of the century." It blew our minds. We were like the Three Stooges - hello, hello, hello, jumping around the room, screaming, giggling. Joey Dee was on the tour as well, we were like, "We're on TV!" We all went downstairs and went swimming in the swimming pool and had soda pop, and it was the greatest feeling having Dick Clark endorse your record because you knew it was going to be big. When it hit Number 1, it was everything I ever wanted. After we got our first royalty cheque, I went straight out to Lord & Taylor and bought this fabulous pant suit, it had a mink top and matching mink pants.

Ronnie Spector (left, in the 1960s with then husband Phil) today: "John Lennon got me to sing Be My Baby in his ear and pretended to faint."

You cover The Beatles' I'll Follow The Sun on *English Heart*. You and The Beatles clicked from the moment you first met, didn't you?
We played the London Palladium and Decca Records threw a party and in walked The Beatles, The Rolling Stones… The Beatles loved America, they wanted to know everything about it, especially the music, What about this singer? What about that singer? What about that group? It went on like that all night. They were so enthusiastic, and knew everything about us and our music, and I really don't know how. John [Lennon] took me shopping on Carnaby Street for boots and shirts. One night we went to the Crazy Elephant, a club in London, and I taught them all the different dances, the Jerk, the Twist. Me and George [Harrison] were singing Mockingbird all night until our throats were dry. John got me to sing Be My Baby in his ear and then pretended to faint.

The Rolling Stones, who were just starting out, were your support act on your first UK tour.
They were like The Beatles, they just wanted to hear about their American heroes. Mick Jagger was such a James Brown nut, so I said, "When you come to the States, I'll take you to see him", and I did. They were sleeping on my mum's rug in her apartment and James Brown was playing at the Apollo. I showed them all round Harlem in the day and then took them to the show. The Ronettes had played the Apollo the month before, so we were treated like royalty, we were ushered straight through.

"The Stones slept on my mum's rug. Then I took them to see James Brown in Harlem."

At the same time you were also friends with the then unknown Jimi Hendrix.
We both hung out at Ondine's in New York. It was the place to be – Bob Dylan went there, Andy Warhol and his crowd, and Jimi Hendrix would be playing guitar and I'd jump onstage with him. He'd play a riff, I'd sing the riff back to him, we went back and forth. In 1970, I went out to visit him in California, he had his mattress on the floor, three or four girls hanging round his bed, and he asked me to put a couple of my 'oooo's on Earth Blues. For him I'd do anything.

Ronnie Spector's new album, English Heart, is out now. See ronniespector.com for details of her May UK tour.

Getty

Where Were You When...

Rude Boys Hit Britain

The '60s saw immigration from the UK's former colonies peak, enriching the nation culturally but sparking ugly racial tensions. The Specials' Lynval Golding recalls how the first-ever reggae Number 1 helped bring the youth together.

Date: April 16, 1969

Event: Reggae scored its first UK Number 1 with Desmond Dekker's Israelities, the title referencing the Rastafarian belief that Ethiopia was the true Zion. For black communities, the hit was a stirring validation of West Indian culture in Britain and accelerated the erosion of racial boundaries.

Eyewitness: The Specials' Lynval Golding

Lynval Golding: "I arrived in England aged nine, smartly dressed, very sharp."

"When Desmond Dekker hit Number 1 in 1969 with Israelites, it was like we had arrived, the West Indian community had finally been recognised and was being celebrated through our music.

My love of ska and reggae had started a decade earlier, though, with the Mr Green Sound system, which played on a Friday and Saturday in the tiny village of Mendez in the parish of St Catherine in rural Jamaica where I grew up.

We were poor, there was no electricity or running water, but we sung gospel music on a Sunday, and we listened to the radio though the week. We could pick up the Cuban music stations which would be playing calypso, and our parents would also play Elvis and Jim Reeves. But then on a Friday and Saturday night, oh my goodness, we'd get to hear the Mr Green Sound System.

Every village and town in Jamaica had a sound system, and he'd play all the new releases. He prided himself on having all the current songs, so I was introduced to mento, which is Jamaican folk music, and US R&B like Fats Domino, which would feed into Jamaican music and lead to ska. Come the early '60s, that sound system introduced me to Prince Buster, Derrick Morgan, Byron Lee And The Dragonaires, the music that would inform The Specials.

IThe whole community got together, me and my friends would dance in the street barefoot to these pounding sounds, and the music would be so loud, you could here it for miles around. It would rumble through the fields.

My dad was a tailor, based in Gloucester in the UK, so the plan was he'd make enough money to come back home; instead, he called the family over when I was nine to live there. We spent 16 days on a ship and when we arrived, we were smartly dressed, very sharp – I was in a handmade suit, shirt, tie, a felt hat which later became known as a pork pie hat, brogue shoes… It was what became known as the rude boy look with The Specials and 2Tone.

Of course, the musical landscape was totally different in the UK. I heard The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, Tamla Motown, Otis Redding, Sam and Dave, Sam Cooke. It was very exciting but at the same time, reggae took a back seat. I didn't hear it played anywhere, until we moved to Coventry because of my dad's work.

By then I was in my late teens and had left school, and the West Indian community was thriving. There was a centre, we'd all gather, share news, listen to music and then there were the blues parties, everyone crammed in together, the music blaring out, no one talking, just dancing from Friday night to Sunday night, we all lived for the weekend.

We were listening to soul, rocksteady, Desmond Dekker's Israelites, and suddenly the song was being played on Radio 1. To hear our culture being recognised, it was like, our time is now! Suddenly it wasn't just black people listening to reggae music, everyone was, racial barriers were being eroded and communities were coming together. Such is the strength of music.

Desmond Dekker became an overnight hero, my hero, and seeing him sing Israelites on Top Of The Pops, knowing everyone my age was doing the same regardless of colour, it was a momentous occasion. Getting to Number 1 was a big deal then too, especially for a black man singing reggae. It opened the gates for more reggae – the Harry J All-Stars' Liquidator, Return Of Django by The Upsetters, Long Shot Kick De Bucket by The Pioneers, these were some of the songs that brought The Specials together. That coming together of black and white that happened with Desmond Dekker, that was a blueprint for The Specials to go forward as a group in the '70s."

As told to Clive Prior

The Specials tour the UK this autumn. See thespecials.com for dates

Special relations: West Indians greeted by students at Waterloo station, December 1961.

"It was a big deal for a black man singing reggae to get to Number 1."

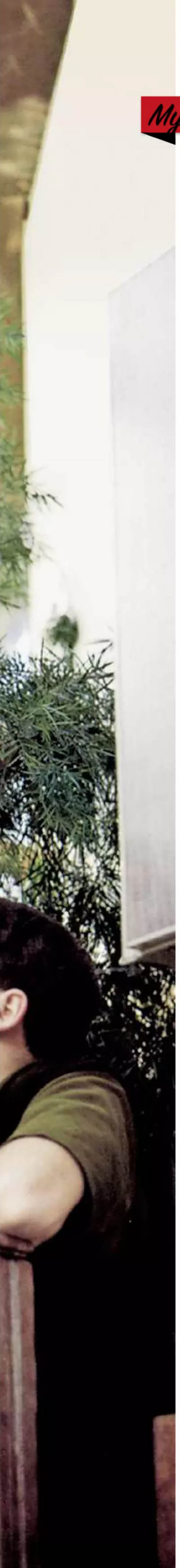
Getty (2)

What GOES ON!

Skanking full stop: Desmond Dekker on his way to Number 1, Top Of The Pops, '69.

What GOES ON!

Spiral tribe: Arthur Lee and Love, '67; "Set The Scene gently fucks you up then it rebuilds you."



My Sounds Of The '60s

Richard Hawley

Exploding Pink Floyd bass lines, "mental" Roger McGuinn guitar solos, visions of Jimi reading Marvel comics while imagining beautiful things, the near-religious joy of Dusty's voice. Sheffield's warmly baritoned singer-songwriting ace chooses his '60s best.

PINK FLOYD
See Emily Play
(Columbia, 1967)

I grew up on rock'n'roll, but one of my best mates at school played me Pink Floyd. On See Emily Play, with that exploding bass line at the beginning, I was like, What the fuck? It's unforgiving, acidic, and it has that rock'n'roll thing with the slap-back echo. The lyrics are touching, too. Later I found out Syd had written it as Games For May, after a festival they played. I've got the poster from it on my shed wall.

THE STOOGES
I Wanna Be Your Dog
(Elektra, 1969)

We've seen in the New Year with this for the past 15 years. It's just that fearsome, vicious feedback at the start and then John Cale's really smart production. It's the only rock'n'roll record with Christmas bells on it that works, and then that one-note piano thing all the way through. It's relentless, and sexy as fuck. It's the kind of music you want to fuck to, drink to, fight to, smash everything up to and then build everything up again. It's pure rock'n'roll.

THE BYRDS
I See You
(On Fifth Dimension*, Columbia, 1966)*

They're supposed to be these fey, wispy, folky agitators, but the beat of this song is very rockabilly, like Sonny Terry's Uncle Bud from 1956. I love the juxtaposition of the esoteric lyrics with the pulsing rock beat, and then Roger McGuinn's guitar solo which is mental, the randomness of it. He says he was influenced by Coltrane, with these beautiful, controlled harmonies and a skin-popping smackhead doo-wop beat.

VELVET UNDERGROUND
I Heard Her Call My Name
(On White Light White Heat*, Verve, 1968)*

If you wanted to distil everything about nihilism and William Burroughs into one song, here it is: "I heard her call my name, my mind split open", and then this vicious guitar solo. Years later I worked with Sterling Morrison and Moe Tucker, and I lent Sterling the '60s amp I'd bought with money from my paper round. I've kept the exact amp settings he used.

CAPTAIN BEEFHEART
Dropout Boogie
(On Safe As Milk*, Buddah, 1967*

This is from his first album, recorded in 1967, with Ry Cooder on it and Taj Mahal guesting. I was hooked from the moment I heard it – it was the next step up from the rock'n'roll I'd heard as a kid. I could see where it had come from, from Howlin' Wolf and John Lee Hooker, and that lovely, disturbing middle bit – that kind of playground-sounding thing. Magic.

Hawley moly: "I put on Hendrix's first two albums and my head is blown."

"I lent Sterling Morrison my amp – and have kept the exact same settings."

JEFFERSON AIRPLANE
White Rabbit
(RCA, 1967)

It's the bolero that grabs you, that long build-up, and then Grace Slick's voice – what an amazing singer – and then the pay-off at the end is just mental. You have to wait for it, not like a T.Rex or disco tune where you're into the groove right away. Then there's the Alice In Wonderland thing – "one pill makes you larger/And one pill makes you small".

13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS
You're Gonna Miss Me
(International Artists, 1966)

The sheer bravery of it. To make music like this in Austin, Texas, under that anvil of social and religious pressure, with such emotion and depth – how do you do it? I got a copy from Barry at Record Collector [Sheffield record shop]. He had, like, seven shrinkwrapped originals upstairs for a million pounds and he got me a reissue of that first album. Now I've got all the original albums and singles.

LOVE
Set The Scene
(On Forever Changes*, Elektra, 1967)*

A lot of my mates would put on the Stone Roses album, which is a great record, but then I'd lay this on them and it floored them. It gently fucks you up and then, by the end, it rebuilds you. Arthur Lee's lyrics are off the scale, and it doesn't matter what state you're in, it makes sense. It's nourishing, not just this track but the whole of *Forever Changes*.

JIMI HENDRIX
Castles Made Of Sand
(On Axis: Bold As Love*, 1967)*

I'm 13, I'm really into the guitar, I put on Hendrix's first two albums and my head is blown. You've got this guy who has gone through hell to get where he is, he's been through the chitlin' circuit, through Europe's dives – how does he become so proficient on stage when backstage is such a hell-hole? I love that juxtaposition: he's sat in some freezing cold transit van, reading his Marvel comics and seeing another universe.

DUSTY SPRINGFIELD
Son Of A Preacher Man
(Atlantic, 1968)

It was recorded in American Studios in Memphis, and it's got that beautiful funky, lolling groove they were so good at creating. Dusty sings with that colossal voice and it's like… How do human beings create something so beautiful? There is so much space in this song, and it is dirty as fuck. I'm not a religious man, but there's something so wrong about it which which makes it so right.

As told to Lois Wilson

Hawley's Hollow Meadows is out now on Parlophone.

Courtesy Phil Smee; Steve Gullick

Goo Goo Barabajagal (Love Is Hot)

In 1969, Donovan was a star on both sides of the Atlantic and itching to celebrate the counterculture's transmutational highs. Cue a spontaneous session with the UK's finest studio players and the mercurial guitar genius of Jeff Beck.

LABEL
Pye
RELEASED
June 1969
CHART PEAK
UK 12/ US 36
COMPOSER
Donovan
PRODUCER
Mickie Most
RECORDED
Olympic Studios

"My *Greatest Hits* album came out at the beginning of 1969, went into the US Top 5 and was certified gold, so I was in a really good place when my producer Mickie Most called up and said, 'Donovan, it's time to record another single.'

I was staying at my cottage in Hertfordshire with a couple of days off between tours and had these two chords I'd put together. I was reading Nicholas Culpeper's Complete Herbal [from 1653] and I thought, I want to write a song about a herbalist, a shaman, about all the magical plants we were discovering as part of the bohemian underground, like magic mushrooms. And so the lyric formed *(sings)*, 'She came, she came to meet a man, she found an angel/He very wise in the herbal lore, has got young cure now/She came, she came to free the pain with his wild flower."

I'd also been thinking about The Beatles, at that time we were very close, and I was messing around with their 'goo goo g'joob' [from I Am The Walrus] and that turned into *(sings)* "Goo goo, goo goo, Barabajagal was his name now".

I played the song to Mickie Most. He said it sounded great and he had an idea. He was making an album with Jeff Beck and his group, the album would be called *Beck-Ola*, and Mickie said he'd wait for Jeff to have a day off from touring and then tell him he was making a record with Donovan. I thought that was a brilliant plan. Then he said he wouldn't play the demo to the group before they arrived in the studio but instead, when they arrived, he'd ask me to play the song through once to them and then we'd record it three times. That way it would be spontaneous and in the moment.

When I arrived at Olympic Studios in London for the session, the drummer Micky Waller was already there, he was getting his drums together and playing these paradiddles, and I thought he must have heard the track because he was playing the perfect pattern for the song. I asked him and he said, 'I've not heard a bloody thing.' Then Nicky Hopkins came in, looking very thin and very cool. He walked over to the piano in the studio, sat down, opened up a Silver Surfer comic book and started reading it.

Mickie asked me to play the song to [Hopkins]. Now, it's usually the keyboardist who arranges the song but there were only two chords so it didn't need much arranging. He started playing what was needed, then stopped, looked at me, said, 'Got it,' and went back to reading again.

Then Woody [Ron Wood] came in. I played him the song, he was like, 'Got it.' Then in came the two girls, Lesley Duncan and Madeline Bell, and they were the bees knees, the business all over the studios. I played it to the girls and Madeline went straight into singing those wonderful backing vocals, *(sings)* 'Goo goo, goo goo Barabajagal.' I was bowled over, like, Oh wow, because it sounded so incredible.

Much later Jeff Beck came in, wearing *the* jeans, and *the* T-shirt, and he had *the* haircut. I knew Jeff through my wife Linda, my sunshine super girl, she was a friend of Jeff's then-girlfriend Celia Hammond, and I'd visited them a couple of times with Linda.

Back in the studio it was like Spinal Tap – Jeff sits down and no one says a word. He just sits and looks around at everyone looking at the floor, and Nicky still reading his comic book. Mickie gets me to play the song, then he tells Jeff to get his guitar out. Jeff looks around, can't see his guitar. 'Where is my bloody guitar?' Then he realises it's locked in the van and he hasn't got the keys.

By this time Mickie has laid out a buffet table of hors d'oeuvres and fine wines, which we weren't allowed to touch until after the session. Jeff gets someone to call a hire company to get him a Fender Strat and all the hire companies are suddenly going crazy to get him a Fender, and when it arrives we finally cut the song.

We do the first take and it sounds great, but it's too hot. It needs to stop at some point, it needs a bridge, so I added the spoken-word breakdown. On the third take, that was it, finished.

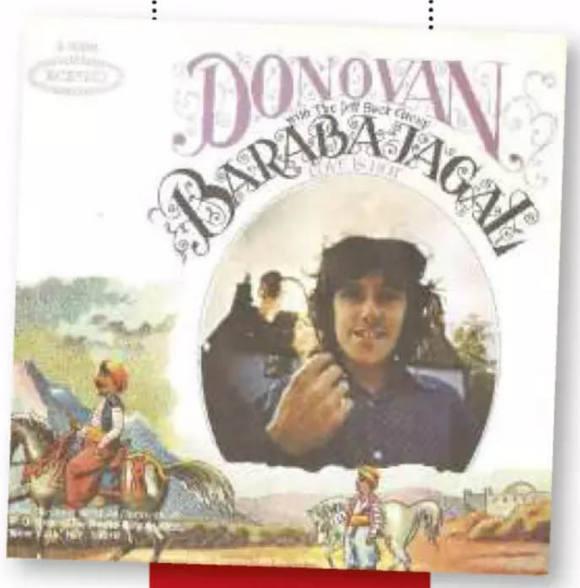
What I love most about the track is that bridge: 'In love pool eyes float feathers after the struggle/ The hopes burst and shot joy all through the mind… Love is hot, truth is molten.' I was thinking of jazz and poetry, and the mission always was to bring poetry back into popular culture, because with poetry comes meaningful lyrics, ecology, feminism, civil rights, a voice.

And then the groove is just incredible too. I began as a drummer myself, I forced my parents to get me a drum kit on the never-never when I was 14. I listened to Gene Krupa and Art Blakey and I played my guitar like a drummer plays the drums to get that rhythm. That's why it's so solid. I'm still very proud of the song but I never saw it as a hit at the time. For me, it was a ritualistic dance track, but Mickie knew it would do well the moment he heard those first two chords.

It's very hard to play live, especially without Jeff Beck, but I'll be doing it acoustically at my 70th birthday celebration shows in London and New York. I'll be cross-legged on a sheepskin on a riser telling stories and singing songs. I've heard Jeff is in New York and I'm going to try and convince him to bring his acoustic guitar if he's around. It might happen. Who knows?"

As told to Lois Wilson

Donovan's 70th birthday concert takes place at the London Palladium on Friday, May 6, 2016. For info and festival shows please go to www.donovan.ie



Alamy

"I wanted to write a song about a shaman, about all the magical plants."

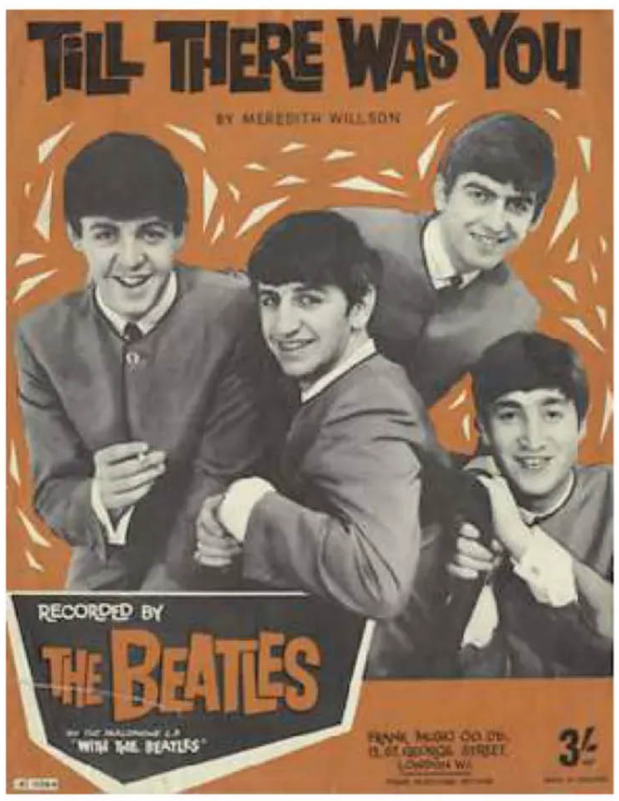
Bare cheek: psychedelic Donovan, ready for botanical enlightenment.

Ballad of the sad young men: the Fabs on Granada TV's Late Scene Extra, November 25, 1963.

Getty

Till There Was You

Written for a Broadway musical, popularised in America by an objectionable beauty queen, and the song that landed The Beatles their record deal, Till There Was You has serious form. Lois Wilson uncovers the story behind one of rock's pivotal cover versions.



COMPOSER
Meredith Willson
COVERED BY
The Beatles, on *With The Beatles*, 1963

On July 30, 1963, The Beatles entered London's Abbey Road studios and, with producer George Martin and engineer Norman Smith, recorded Till There Was You for inclusion on their second album, *With The Beatles*.

In late March 2016, a 10-inch acetate record featuring the songs Till There Was You and Hello Little Girl was due to be auctioned in the UK. Recorded by The Beatles in early 1962, the disc was cut at the HMV record store in London's Oxford Street, and given by their manager Brian Epstein to producer George Martin at EMI, with a view to him signing the group. While Hello Little Girl was an early Lennon original, it was Till There Was You that piqued Martin's interest, and which would later play a crucial role in the Fabs' evolution.

The song was sentimental paean written by composer, conductor and playwright Meredith Willson for his Broadway musical The Music Man, which debuted in 1957. Till There Was You had been a mainstay of The Beatles' Star Club performances in Hamburg and they played it, at Brian Epstein's request, at their January 1962 Decca audition. When George Martin heard that recording, he glimpsed a group who could appeal to a teen audience but also tap into the world of light entertainment, singing far more sophisticated material.

"Songs like Till There Was You and Ain't She Sweet showed that we weren't just another rock'n'roll group," recalled Paul McCartney, who sang The Beatles' version.

The song cast McCartney as the rosewater balladeer, a role he'd fully embrace after composing And I Love Her for *A Hard Day's Night*, surely modelled on the track. "I looked at the recording scene and realised that a few people were taking offbeat songs, putting them into their acts and modernising them a bit. So I looked at a few songs with that in mind. Till There Was You was one that I looked at; no one was doing that one except Peggy Lee, so I thought it'd be nice to play," he said.

It was an older cousin, Elizabeth Robbins (nee Danher), who first introduced McCartney to Peggy Lee's cover. "She was quite an influence on me," he said. "Betty would play me records like Peggy Lee's Fever, and Peggy Lee did Till There Was You as well. I didn't know that it was from the musical The Music Man until many years later. This led me to songs like A Taste Of Honey and things which were slightly to the left and the right of rock'n'roll."

Peggy Lee's version, a breathy, intimate come-on, appeared on the US version of her 1960 album, *Latin Ala Lee!*, and was a Top 30 hit in the UK in 1961, remaining on the chart for four weeks.

The song had been a hit before, though – it charted the previous year in the US with a version by Anita Bryant, a former Miss Oklahoma beauty queen and a spokesperson for the Florida Citrus Commission. Pinned to schmaltzy arranged strings, her vocal approach is much more wholesome than Lee's, her political stance less so. In 1977 Bryant led a crusade against gay rights which led to a boycott of Florida orange juice by the gay community and activists including Barbra Streisand, Bette Midler and Jane Fonda. Country singer David Allan Coe even wrote a song, Fuck Anita Bryant, in response to her offensive rhetoric.

Till There Was You was first issued on November 26, 1957 – before the Broadway production's first night, on December 19 of that year, and the original cast album version of January 1958. Produced by Nelson Riddle, with his orchestra and 17-year-old singer Sue Raney (who had just signed to Capitol), it introduced the song to a modern jazz audience. The subsequently became a standard.

Saxophonist Sonny Rollins added a black consciousness on his instrumental take for his 1958 *Freedom Suite* album; Etta Jones placed it in an after-hours club setting on her 1961 album *Something Nice*; and more recently Rod Stewart included it on 2003's *As Time Goes By: The Great American Songbook Volume II*. Even Paul McCartney returns to the song once in a while – see his 2006 live DVD The Space Within Us, which captures a heartfelt performance of it during his autumn 2005 US tour. A fine song then, that has served many well.

"People were covering offbeat songs. No one was doing that one except Peggy Lee."

No fixed abode: The Vagrants, with guitarist Leslie West (far left).

Nuggets Unearthed

The Vagrants

They grew up across the road from the future Johnny Ramone and later gave us the mighty Mountain. In between came a gritty Otis Redding cover, Respect. Mark Paytress digs up another *Nuggets* stonker.

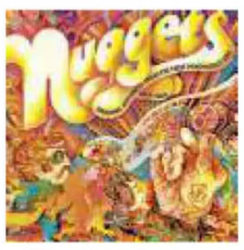
Early in 1967, guitarist Leslie West excitedly popped into Atlantic Records in New York to pick up a copy of his group's latest single. Veterans of several flop 45s, The Vagrants had high hopes for their cover of Otis Redding's Respect.

"I get out of the elevator and who's standing there but Otis Redding," recalls West today. "I said, Mr Redding, I play in a new group and we've recorded your song." Macon's finest graciously signed the record, 'To Leslie with Respect.'

By the end of the year, Redding was dead and Respect an international hit. But not for The Vagrants. "We thought it would be a break-out record for us," West says, "but Jerry Wexler, who ran Atlantic with Ahmet Ertegun, had Aretha Franklin record it."

The Vagrants' story begins three years earlier, in late August 1964, when West and his fledgling band mates gazed enviously as The Beatles leapt into a helicopter after their show at the Forest Hills Tennis Stadium. "I could see four lit cigarettes as they took off," West recalls. "I thought, Wow, I wanna do this…"

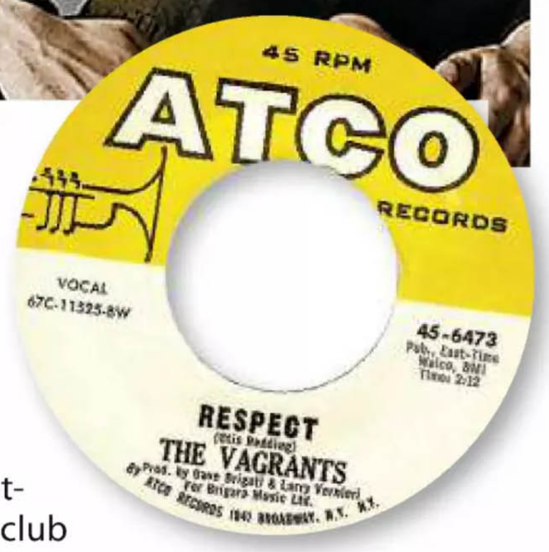
Forest Hills in Queens was home to West and his younger brother Larry, and, he says, "a beautiful area full of divorcees like my mum". There were plenty of young pop fanatics, too. The session guitar ace Waddy Watchel lived in the same building, and taught West how to play. Across the road lived one John Cummings. "We used to call him Johnny Beatle," says West of the young Johnny Ramone, "because of his hair. He used to carry our guitars."



24-carat gold: the original *Nuggets* compilation.

SONG
Respect
LABEL
Atco
RELEASED
1967
CHART PEAK
None
COMPOSER
Otis Redding
PRODUCERS
Dave Brigati, Larry Vernieri

"I could see four lit cigarettes as The Beatles' helicopter took off in Queens."



By the mid-'60s, The Vagrants – vocalist Peter Sabatino, brother Larry on bass, keyboardist Jerry Storch and drummer Roger Mansour – had turned semi-pro. After a long Manhattan residency at Scott Muni's club The Rolling Stone, they became regulars at the Action House on Long Island. "Then one night it burned down," West says. A stray firework from the group's act apparently did the damage.

"We had an entertaining show," he continues. Like fellow Long Island habitués The Rascals and Vanilla Fudge, The Vagrants soon specialised in soul and beat covers, slowed-down and stretched out. "But as far as putting it down on vinyl, we couldn't do it." After recording 45s for Southern Sound and Vanguard, they signed to Atco hoping to emulate The Rascals' success.

"It was our road manager Fat Frankie who suggested we do Respect," says West of a song that had been a minor chart success for Ann Arbor bowlheads The Rationals. "Fat Frankie also said, 'Why don't you sing it?' I hadn't sung shit in The Vagrants until then."

Respect started out uncannily like I'm Waiting For The Man, grooved along at a respectful Otis tempo, boasted a tough sandpaper vocal from West, and was a glorious failure perfect for exhumation on 1972's *Nuggets* compilation. The August 1967 follow-up, the fragrant A Sunny Summer Rain, met a similar fate. But its producer and co-writer Felix Pappalardi was the catalyst for the change in West's fortunes and the fulfilment of the dream he had when he witnessed The Beatles' take-off.

"When I found out that Felix produced Cream, I was on top of the world," says West. "That's where I wanted to go, like Cream or Hendrix, like a British band." Early in '69, with The Vagrants out of songs and out of their depth, the pair began work on West's first solo album. By August, they were wowing Woodstock with a new heavy-duty rock band – Mountain.

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To Sir with love: George Martin and (right) with The Beatles recording With A Little Help From My Friends, March, 1967.

A touch of class

On March 8, Sir George Martin, the man who signed The Beatles and helped create their peerless canon of studio recordings, died aged 90. Here Jim Irvin revisits the illuminating meeting they had a decade ago to talk about the making of *Sgt. Pepper*.

TEN YEARS AGO, MOJO WENT TO ABBEY Road on the occasion of the release of mash-up Beatles compilation, *Love*, to talk to Sir George Martin about his life and work and the innovationof *Sgt. Pepper*. We awaited his arrival in the penthouse mixing room at the top of the building. He was 30 minutes late.

"This is most unlike him," we were told. Just then, he wandered in, little sign of infirmity at 80. After apologising for his tardiness he said: "Now I know what it feels like to be a prostitute." It was a disarming first utterance from one of our distinguished heroes. He explained: "I've been standing on the street in Bayswater, staring into cars, trying to find a cab that was free!"

At that time, Sir George had been entering that building on and off for 56 years, the first time, in 1950, as a "not very good" 24-year-old oboe player who'd been offered a job as assistant at Parlophone; on this occasion, he is an octogenarian knight and national treasure, winding-up his duties on what would be his final project for the musicians who had made him the most famous record producer in the world. ➢

Rex, Mirrorpix

In person, he maintained an old-world sense of propriety, but was also twinkly, unstuffy. This well-spoken, class-crossing persona was one he'd created for himself, the son of a carpenter, raised in a poor part of North London, who'd talked his way into the home of British classical music and, in time, found himself at the very cutting edge of pop music production.

His work was wide: jazz, classics, film scores, comedy, everything from Matt Munro to The Action; America to Jimmy Webb; Stackridge to Celine Dion. In the wonder years of Merseybeat, 1963-'64, his productions occupied a staggering 51 of the available 104 weeks at Number 1. In the US, 31 Beatles songs he'd recorded charted in 1964. EMI paid him £64 a week.

SGT. PEPPER'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND, released on June 1, 1967, is often regarded as the moment pop's possibilities truly exploded. Yet this futuristic record was full of old-fashioned sounds. These are, in order of appearance: a theatre orchestra tuning up, four French horns, harpsichord, Lowrey organ, tambura, harp, a string octet, calliope, accordion, a selection of classical Indian instruments (sitar, dilruba, swarmandal and tabla), a clarinet trio, tubular bells, a comb-and-tissue-paper trio and a 41-piece orchestra. Together they illustrate one of the curious anomalies of the '60s: how, after a few smokes, British war-babies schooled in rock'n'roll would develop (or rediscover) an affinity with the purview of Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear, imagining an attendant soundtrack inspired by the circus, the Victorian nursery, Edwardian music hall and rinky-dink gentility.

Electronic instruments and devices for distorting sound were still rare in 1967. Rock was only just becoming worth inventing for. So it was the colouring, the collision, the strange juxtaposition that felt radical. Just as *Sgt. Pepper*'s sleeve brought together disparate faces and textures to create an impossible scenario, so did the music. It's the sound of The Beatles being let off the leash."It was the freedom album," confirmed George Martin. "It was about giving themselves the freedom to experiment and grow up."

It was also about adopting a new guise, to rid The Beatles, once and for all, of what Paul McCartney described as "the four fucking mop tops". McCartney had the idea for the Lonely Hearts Club Band on a flight back from Kenya in November 1966, after a stopover in France in which he'd roamed around, unrecognised, wearing spectacles and a false moustache.

He wondered about giving The Beatles a collective disguise, an alter ego. A strong memory of Paul's boyhood was going to see brass bands playing in Liverpool's municipal spaces, like the island bandstand in Sefton Park, thus the Lonely Hearts Club Band began to take shape join his mind.

Initially, the idea had more to do with visual imagery, but as soon as recording began it was clear The Beatles also intended to transform themselves sonically. The first batch of material stemmed from the idea to write songs evoking childhood memories of Liverpool. John brought in Strawberry Fields Forever, Paul wrote Penny Lane and dusted off a whimsical tune he'd composed aged 16, When I'm 64. Though only this last song appeared on the finished album, those sessions at the end of 1966 pointed the way. There was one rule: break every rule.

"I realised this was going to be different right at the beginning, with Strawberry Fields Forever," said Sir George. "For me that opened a completely new field of dreams. Paul had very definite ideas about his songs, he'd sometimes come in and record rough versions where he played everything, but John had complex ideas which he could never organise – he couldn't change a light bulb. So it was my job to get inside John's brain, find out what he wanted and deliver it."

One thing that's immediately different from previous Beatles albums is the use of unusual room ambience and reverbs, making even the locations of these performances sound exotic. "A lot of that was down to Geoff Emerick," said Martin. Emerick was only 19 when he became The Beatles full-time engineer during the *Revolver* sessions, and by *Pepper* he was feeling confident.

"He brought a new mind to the recordings, always suggesting sonic ideas," explained Martin. "Different kinds of reverb, what we could do with the voices. He was quite prepared to break rules. 'You call that top? This is top!' he'd say, turning [the EQ dial] all the way round. He was always experimenting and the bosses at EMI didn't like it. He got severely reprimanded when they found him putting a microphone in a pail of water to see what the effect was. I loved that freedom of thought and the fact we didn't have to down tools at the end of the day, we could go on developing."

"*Sgt. Pepper* was The Beatles' freedom album. It was about giving themselves the freedom to grow up."

Though the 'Liverpool childhood' concept was abandoned, it sparked Paul's development of the title track. To bring a brass band flavour to the song, Martin arranged a simple part for four French horns. It wasn't until much later in the album's 700 hours of recording that another Beatles sidekick, Neil Aspinall, suggested recording a reprise of the song to bookend a 'concert' by the Lonely Hearts Club Band. The audience hubbub, pit-orchestra tuning up and other effects were added at the mixing stage. The 'concept', therefore, coalesced late in the process.

Even songs which aren't considered among the album's revolutionary moments teem with unusual detail, like Getting Better's bright guitar and its droning sound, provided by an early electric piano, the pianette. Listeners enjoyed trying to identify all the sounds, like Martin's chopped-up calliope on Being For The Benefit Of Mr. Kite. And if you tried playing along you'd notice some of the songs weren't in any recognisable key.

Speeds had been manipulated at every stage. "We played with speeds a lot," confirmed Martin. "It was good to record a drum track, for

"It was my job to get inside John's brain." With Lennon, Abbey Road, June 1967.

Camerafest

"It's time for tea…": taking a break during the *Sgt Pepper* sessions, March 1967.

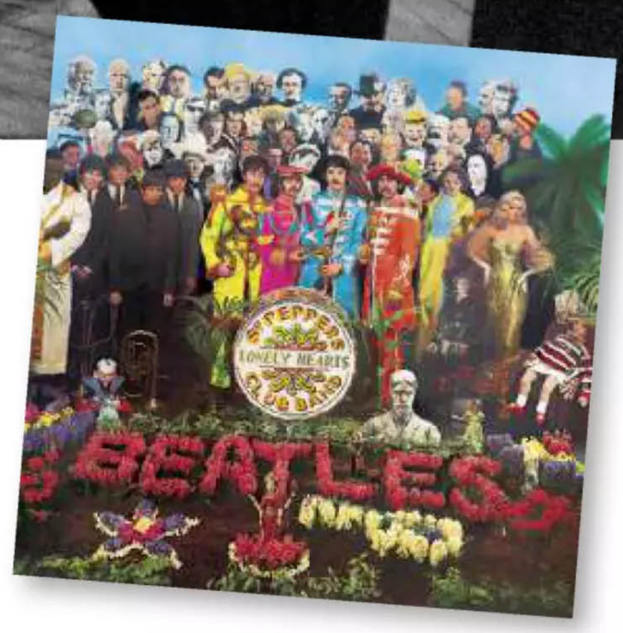
example, at a faster speed so when you played it at normal speed it lowered the tone for a booming tom-tom effect. We did it to the voices too."

HOW DIFFERENT WAS THIS TO MARTIN'S EARLY days at Abbey Road? "Back then we recorded direct to wax disc on a lathe in the control room. The engineer stood and cut the record live. In 1950, the electricity supply wasn't very stable, so the turntable wasn't driven by an electric motor but by a slowly falling weight, suspended from the ceiling. Gravity is a constant force, you see."

In 1955, the young assistant, just 29, was promoted to head of Parlophone Records. "It turned out to be a bit of a poisoned chalice. I didn't realise they'd been thinking of shutting down Parlophone. It was: 'If he fails we were going to shut it down anyway, but lightning might strike, let's see what happens.'"

Martin kept the label, and his job, alive by making successful comic recordings: Spike Milligan, Peter Sellers, Peter Ustinov, Flanders & Swann, Bernard Cribbins. These and his *Beyond The Fringe* cast recording all appealed to The Beatles and helped bond them with their new label boss. The techniques Martin employed on those records, collaging sound effects and performances to mimic the sound of, say, a drunken Irish band in a pub, on Peter Sellers' A Drop Of The Hard Stuff, would come in handy on *Pepper*.

Of course, as Lennon once put it: "You haven't heard *Sgt. Pepper* until you've heard it in mono." The Beatles, Martin and Emerick spent three weeks mixing and compiling the mono version and adding the sound effects. The stereo mix, prepared later by Martin and Emerick alone, shows noticeable differences. One is the speed of She's Leaving Home, nudged in the mono mix to tighten the track and make Paul's voice sound younger, but left in its natural state in the stereo version, which is several seconds longer. There's also a pronounced tape-echo effect all over John's voice on Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds' mono incarnation, giving it a more psychedelic feel. Generally, the mono mix feels tougher.



Sgt Pepper's least rock'n'roll moment is probably George Harrison's Within You Without You – five minutes of Indian classicism, which was a tall order for pop-pickers in 1967. However, the album's most celebrated departure must be the double orchestral crescendo of A Day In The Life, created to fill two 24-bar gaps. "We'd often leave a gap that had to be filled by a solo," Martin explained. "That would be my speciality. The reason the holes were so big in A Day In The Life is that the two different sections had absolutely bugger all in common, and Paul reasoned 24 bars was enough to make the transition between them."

In the score Martin wrote: 'Very, very slow glissando until…" finishing on the highest note each instrument could play in E natural. "I said, I don't want you to climax too quickly – as the actress said to the bishop – and that, at various points I'd marked, they must not be on the same note as the person next to them. They thought I was mad, but they got into it." (On the second crescendo, a cymbal player does indeed climax too soon!)

By the time the album's over we've visited more than one continent and a couple of centuries, and heard about childhood, old age, sex, the circus, wife-beating, drug-taking, death and traffic wardens. Housed in *that* gatefold sleeve, with printed lyrics and cut-out badges and moustaches, *Pepper* was a thrilling package, but tellingly, not too radical to prevent it becoming a massive hit.

Nine months later, The Beatles would surprise us again, with the back-to-basics Lady Madonna, heralding the rootsy phase of 'The White Album' and *Let It Be*.

George Martin wasn't involved in that last one but returned to helm The Beatles' final recording (though penultimate release), the mighty *Abbey Road*. Which is where we, and he, came in. Ⓜ

News Syndication

Iconic Images/Terry O'Neill

RIP THIS JOINT
The Rolling Stones outside the Tin Pan Alley Club, Denmark Street, London, 1963.

NOT FADE AWAY...

From 1963 to 1965 The Rolling Stones helped redefine the look and sound of popular music. A new exhibition of photographer Terry O'Neill's iconic images from that era captures a band – and society – in transition.

TERRY O'NEILL BECAME A PHOTOGRAPHER BY accident. The now 77-year-old originally wanted to be a jazz drummer. Aged 17, he took a job with British Airways' photographic unit as a way of getting a trip to America; the first step, he hoped, in a glittering musical career. But it didn't work out like that. Instead, O'Neill started selling his pictures, and soon became Britain's youngest Fleet Street photographer at the age of 20.

There was no better place for a young photographer to be than London at the start of the 1960s. One day in '63, Terry was sent to Abbey Road studios to photograph The Beatles who'd just had their first Number 1 hit, Please Please Me. Just days later he was sent off to photograph The Rolling Stones.

"Nobody knew at the time that 1963 was a pivotal year," said the Stones' guitarist Keith Richards. "There was a whiff in the air, and I think Terry O'Neill probably felt it as much as I did."

In the months ahead, O'Neill would capture many more emerging stars of the era, including The Who, David Bowie and Elton John. O'Neill's striking images of the Rolling Stones are now celebrated in a new book, Breaking Stones 1963-1965: A Band On The Brink Of Superstardom, and an exhibition of the same name at London's Proud Gallery.

These pictures capture the Stones in their infancy and poised on the cusp of pop stardom. While already grabbing headlines for the length of their hair and their lead singer's lascivious stage performance, the Stones in '63 to '65 with their respectable shirts and ties *and* beatnik-approved leather jackets and Chelsea boots embody a pop culture in transition. From the moment Terry O'Neill took out his camera, he knew he was shooting something special. "I didn't have to work too hard," he says. "They were just immediately cool." ➢

An exhibition, Breaking Stones 1963-1965: A Band On The Brink Of Superstardom, runs at Proud Gallery, Chelsea until June 5. The book of the same name is published by ACC Editions. Info at www.proud.co.uk

LET'S SPEND THE NIGHT TOGETHER

With a group of admirers, backstage at Teddington Studios before the Stones' appearance on Thank Your Lucky Stars, November 1964.

COME ON

Posing in London's Soho in January 1964. The Stones had just released their debut EP, which would reach Number 1 a month later.

Iconic Images/Terry O'Neill

SHE'S SO COLD

Mick Jagger braves another English winter in a chic fur parka with fur-trimmed hood, 1964.

"I DIDN'T HAVE TO WORK TOO HARD. THE STONES WERE JUST IMMEDIATELY COOL."
TERRY O'NEILL

WAITING ON A FRIEND
With comedian and singer/songwriter Kenny Lynch at rehearsals for ABC's Thank Your Lucky Stars, 1964.

DOWN THE ROAD A PIECE
The Stones – not too big yet to carry their own bags – outside Donmar Rehearsal Theatre, London's Covent Garden, 1964.

PLAY WITH FIRE

Mick Jagger shares a smoke with the power behind the Stones, manager Andrew Loog Oldham, 1964.

Iconic Images/Terry O'Neill

OUT OF CONTROL

Goofy and loveable, The Monkees were American television's made-up answer to The Beatles. But, in 1968, a movie starring the group captured them in open rebellion against their on-screen personas and Hollywood itself. Bill Holdship tells the incredible tale of the cult psychedelic film Head.

Alamy

G'day!: The Monkees touch down in Melbourne on September 16, 1968, just as the title of their new film, Head, is announced.

"WHAT IS HEAD? Head is the most extraordinary adventure Western comedy love story mystery drama musical documentary satire ever filmed. And that's putting it mildly."

So boasted the theatrical trailer for The Monkees' only big-screen venture. It would later be celebrated in film lore as the project that first teamed writer-director and Monkees co-creator Bob Rafelson with a fledgling young writer and B-movie actor named Jack Nicholson, beginning a relationship that led to Easy Rider, Five Easy Pieces, and beyond. Head would also later be celebrated in certain camps as a psychedelic masterpiece – a '60s artefact that holds up better than many of the more revered countercultural statements of the era. But in 1968, Head was generally reviled. The Monkees, after all, as wonderful as they could be, were one of the most maligned rock bands of the decade.

Not that there wasn't a smidgen of truth in that '68 trailer's bold claim. If any film defied classification, it would be Head. In addition to Westerns, Head also effectively mimicked and lampooned such Hollywood genres as war, horror, sci-fi, '40s boxing sagas, '60s spy flicks, desert epics, the new psychedelic mentality (Nicholson had recently scripted the Peter Fonda vehicle, The Trip, for director Roger Corman), and rock'n'roll movies.

But when Head opened nationally in six US cities on November 20, 1968 – only weeks after Richard Nixon had won the presidency, ushering in a new era of American paranoia which, in

Rex Features

retrospect, critics have suggested is the state-of-mind Head often reflects – the average person probably didn't even know it was a Monkees movie. Newspaper ads simply portrayed a wimpy-looking balding man with glasses and slight beard and the question: "What is Head all about? Only John Brockman's shrink knows for sure!"

Late-night television commercials also featured the visage of Brockman, a media expert Rafelson and his partner/co-Monkees creator Bert Schneider hired to handle the film's promotional campaign, and just the title word – Head.

"The ad was originally supposed to have a picture of me on it," Rafelson recalls, "but John Brockman was a Marshall McLuhan scholar, and said, 'It doesn't matter whose picture is on it. We're not going to say it's The Monkees. We're just going to get people to say 'What's Head?' and 'Whose Head?' and basically *inquire* people into the theatre.' He was afraid this picture was too radical for The Monkees' "audience, so let's allow people to discover it as an individual movie. That was the philosophy.

> "The publicity campaign couldn't have been better designed to make the film a flop." Peter Tork

ADDING TO THE GENERAL CONFUSION, NICHOLSON and Rafelson arranged to premiere the movie in a Spanish-speaking cinema in New York called El Studio. "It was the first time an English language picture played there," continues Rafelson. "So Jack and I went around New York City saying, 'Say, I hear there's a wonderful movie at El Studio Cinema called Head,' trying to create word-of-mouth. We ended up pasting little 'Head' stickers wherever we could. Jack tried to slip one onto the helmet of a police officer ticketing a chestnut salesman on Fifth Avenue. Jack was putting the sticker on the helmet just as the guy's head turned around and the cop got the sticker on his face. We were thrown up against the wall and both of us were handcuffed – but it was Jack who went to jail."

He continues, "I called every newspaper, every radio station, and said, 'The makers of Head have been busted!' Of course, nobody paid any attention: The producers of a famous Hollywood movie opening *where*? El Studio Cinema?! What the fuck? They must be out of their minds!'"

"In some ways they wanted it to tank," says Peter Tork, who with Micky Dolenz still performs as The Monkees today (singer Davy Jones died in 2012 and Mike Nesmith only sporadically participates in reunion shows). "Publicity for the TV show had been perfect, but the Head campaign couldn't have been better designed to ensure the movie would flop."

Of course, the group's core teeny-bop audience – which was rapidly dwindling following the cancellation of their Emmy-winning series earlier that year – knew that Head was a Monkees film. The "68 Summer Spec" issue of 16 magazine ran photos from the film, using an imaginary storyline and an editorial disclaimer: "Any similarity between the story we have told here and the story you will see in The Monkees' movie is just not possible! Since The Monkees are keeping the story a deep, dark secret. You just gotta go see it and find out for yourself how Davy, Micky, Peter and Mike save themselves from the (ugh!) mad scientist!"

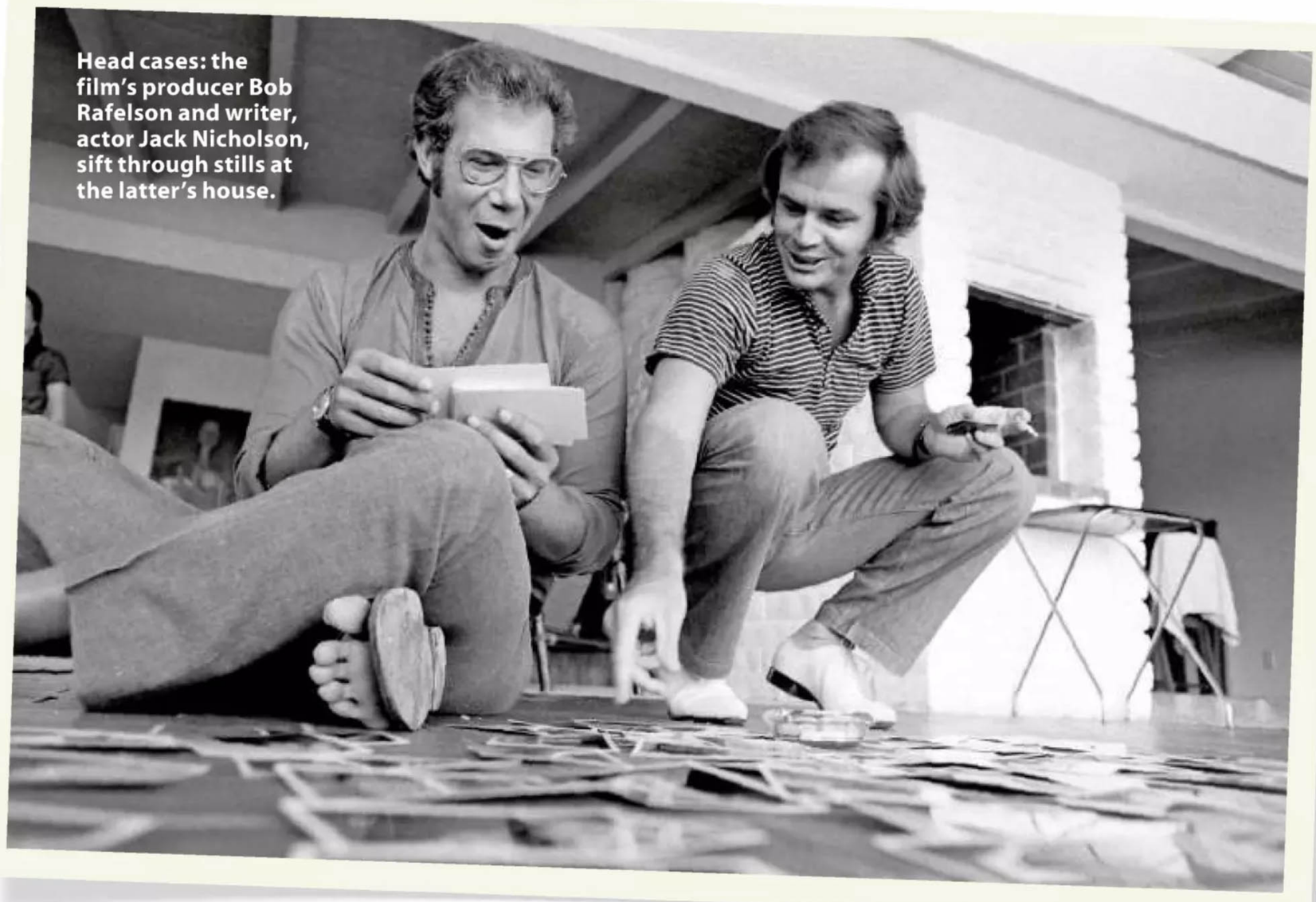
16 couldn't have had any idea at the time how prophetic their use of the words "deep" and "dark" would actually be.

"I don't think Head is cynical," guitarist Mike Nesmith said in a 1997 interview. "[But] there was a darkness to the piece that dealt with the death of a phenomenon." Indeed, when it comes to darkness, Head was the first time the infamous image of a Vietcong prisoner being shot in the head was used in a work of art. (Executive producer Schneider used the shot again in his 1974 Oscar-winning and highly influential documentary Hearts And Minds.)

Then there was the title. The word "head" was already known in the mainstream as having drug connotations – and, surely, parents must have picked up on the sexual reference.

"We called it three different things at three different times," recalls Rafelson. "The first title, Changes, seemed to be best because changes meant something at that time – to do with hallucinations, and the cliché that the only thing you could rely on is change. And, of course, this picture was constantly changing. Then we called it DASturb. Today, everybody misspells words, but it was very new at the time. The third title was Head. Why? First, it took place in somebody's head, in Victor Mature's hair. The Monkees were dandruff. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, we knew the next movie we were making was Easy Rider. We wanted to bill that as 'From the producers who gave you Head!' Unfortunately, nobody saw Head so we couldn't use that."

The few lobby posters that actually featured The Monkees also displayed the warnings: "A movie for a turned-on audience" and ➢



Head cases: the film's producer Bob Rafelson and writer, actor Jack Nicholson, sift through stills at the latter's house.

Getty

➤ "Not suitable for children". ("We didn't shoot the movie on acid," says Rafelson. "But Jack did structure the movie in his mind on an acid trip.")

The kids who did see it couldn't help but be bewildered. The nonlinear film was channel surfing on hallucinogens. Micky jumps from a bridge, is rescued by mermaids, and re-emerges in The Monkees' pad. The group pop in and out of various movies – a David Lean-like desert adventure concludes with Micky blowing up a Coke machine. Dolenz – arrows in his chest – decides he doesn't want to be part of a Western, rips down the cowboy backdrop and enters a boxing drama. Things continue in this insane manner, jumping from evil factories to spiritual saunas. Certain characters keep showing up, including great Kubrick "nutcase" Timothy Carey, and a giant Victor Mature as The Big Victor (RCA Victor was the group's parent label). Both Dolenz and Rafelson say there was talk of sending the reels out to theatres in no particular order.

"A lot of Monkees fans didn't get it at all," says Micky Dolenz. "I remember I was at a car wash in the Valley and this little teenage girl came up to me and said, 'I saw Head.' I was, like, 'That's nice.' And she said, 'How could you support the war like that?' She'd read that whole war sequence – a totally anti-war statement – as being pro-Vietnam. I was stunned. But that showed that our fans didn't get it, that the movie was so far removed from the sensibilities of a Monkees episode. The poor thing just was lost when she saw it. I suspect others had the same problem. People just didn't understand it. I'm not sure I do to this day!

"I'm not even sure Jack and Bob knew what the film was about," he continues. "It was certainly a deconstruction of The Monkees and the whole Hollywood myth. And about us as individuals getting stuck in this black box, which was a metaphor for The Monkees. We used to talk about being in a black box all the time. When we were on tour, especially – but even being on the TV set. We couldn't leave a room or hotel room. We were shuffled around from limo to hotel room to limo, to the back entrance of a concert arena into a dressing room. It was even a little black box on-stage because we used to jump out of these fake Vox amps. So for more than two years, we lived – quite literally – in a little black box.

"But aside from that, I think the movie was just symptomatic of the times."

The reviews were mostly scathing, including a particularly vicious anti-Monkees screed by legendary film critic Pauline Kael in the New Yorker that put the final nails in the coffin. Opening two months after the cancellation of the TV series, Head grossed just $16,111 in box-office receipts, not coming anywhere near the $790,000 Columbia Pictures had sunk into it. Scheduled to follow Candy into London's Piccadilly Classic Cinema in 1968, Head didn't commercially debut in the UK until March 1977.

The soundtrack album – cleverly assembled by Nicholson using dialogue and music from the film – was the first Monkees album to miss Billboard's Top 10, peaking at Number 45. A guilty pleasure among certain hipsters at the time, and featuring Neil Young, Ry Cooder, Earl Palmer, and Buffalo Springfield drummer Dewey Martin, the album showcased two of Tork's best tracks (Can You Dig It and Do I Have To Do This All Over Again), a Nesmith gem (Circle Sky), a Nilsson cover (Daddy's Song), and the Jack Nitzsche-arranged Goffin-King psychedelic treasure, The Porpoise Song. The last of these songs would later become a cult classic – though when issued as a single in October '68, it peaked at Number 62. Clearly, the end of the group was nigh.

"The Monkees were going off the air about the time Head was being wrapped up," recalls Tork. "As a result, we didn't do anything in the public eye for months – we toured Japan and that was it – and the public forgot about us. The Monkees were a TV-driven group. TV is a medium for short attention spans and, by God, if you don't keep them fed, they're gone. By the time Head came out, nobody was interested in The Monkees, especially the avant-garde – the 'hipoisie' [hip-wah-zee], as Micky calls them. And the kids were not interested in a psychedelic movie. So, The Monkees tanked in a massive way.

"I left right after that, not because I saw the handwriting on the wall but because I had things I wanted to do," Tork continues. "They went on without me for a while – touring Mexico City and so on. But they would've had a hard road to go to regenerate The Monkees to where we'd been [before Head]."

LIKE MANY GREAT POP ARTEFACTS, THERE HAS BEEN much critical revisionism over the decades. Following a screening in Los Angeles in 1973, LA Times chief film critic Charles Champlin wrote: "You wonder how critics and early audiences could have missed the film's fierce energy and… tart, iconoclastic point of view." In fact, it was that very point of view, with The Monkees both acknowledging and attacking their own manufactured image that would endear Head to the more irony-inclined punk and post-punk generations.

When the film was first released on video in 1987, John Kordosh summed up the new mood when he wrote in Creem: "Head reveals some bitter truths about rock stardom. It's a dark movie… and – ultimately – a remarkably accurate assessment (and forecast) of what this rock business was becoming. Head is anti-rock and anti-fame [and] so self-mocking that it borders on tragedy."

Interestingly, in a rare comment about the film – to Rex Reed of the New York Times in 1970 – Jack Nicholson used one of those same labels. "Nobody ever saw that, man," he said of Head, "but I saw it 158 million times. I loved it. Filmatically, it's the best rock'n'roll movie ever made. I mean, it's anti-rock."

Today, there are dozens of web pages that explore the hidden meanings of Head and extol its virtues as one of the great '60s rock films. It's been heralded as a direct influence on everything from MTV to Monty Python's Flying Circus and episodic, Dadaist comedy classics like Kentucky Fried Movie, Airplane and Blazing Saddles.

"I get letters from all kinds of people, rock groups, asking if they can see a print of Head," says Rafelson. "I've been asked to do a director's commentary for DVD – which I doubt I'll do because I've never seen any movie I've ever made. Nevertheless, this has turned into the anthem movie of rock'n'roll. That's shocking because The Monkees were hardly the rock'n'roll anthem-bearers but rock bands identify with it. Mick Jagger called decades ago and said, 'I remember you asking if you could see Cocksucker Blues when no one else had seen it. And I sent you a print. So now you let me see Head.' One critic wrote that if you could take one film from the '60s and put it in a sealed time capsule and bring it up a hundred years from now, Head is the movie. A lot of people have expressed similar sentiments."

Yet The Monkees going all experimental with Head shouldn't have come as a surprise to those who watched the second and final season of the TV show. It has often been documented how they were a manufactured group that evolved into a 'real' rock'n'roll ➤

Allstar

> "It was certainly a deconstruction of The Monkees and the whole Hollywood myth." Micky Dolenz

TV personalities: (from left) Davy Jones, Mike Nesmith, Micky Dolenz, Peter Tork, September '66.

Can you dig it?: Peter Tork and Davy Jones in a still from Head's desert sequence, shot in Palm Springs and Utah, spring 1968.

band; how Nesmith put his fist through a hotel wall, threatening then music supervisor Don Kirshner with: "That could have been your face"; how that led to The Monkees taking artistic control of their third – and arguably best – album, *Headquarters*, a mighty respectable effort in any rock era. And how the group was pretty good live for a band that supposedly "couldn't play their instruments". Take it from someone who saw them – Detroit's Olympia Stadium, January 14, 1967 – they rocked good. Head's stunning Circle Sky concert scene – filmed in Salt Lake City on the final day of shooting, May 21, 1968 – is definitive proof.

But after playing rock stars on the road and introducing American concert audiences to Jimi Hendrix, The Monkees were becoming increasingly uninterested in the TV series (even if hipsters like the acid guru and Merry Prankster Timothy Leary were singing its praises).

"I was getting a little bored with doing the same show every week – even after only two years," says Dolenz. "We'd met The Beatles. We'd been around the world. To come back to doing a half-hour TV show seemed like a bit of a letdown. In retrospect, I think we probably should have kept doing the TV show. But then the idea came along to do this movie."

ON THE SECOND SEASON THE FOURSOME TOOK more chances. Dolenz and Tork directed episodes. The final show, broadcast on May 25, 1968, ended with a little-known folk singer named Tim Buckley performing Song To The Siren. The second-to-last episode – The Monkees Blow Their Minds – featured special guest Frank Zappa reversing personas with Nesmith in an opening vignette that concluded with Nesmith-as-Zappa sledge-hammering a car to the strains of Zappa's Mother People. Thus, Zappa's appearance in Head shouldn't have come as that big of a surprise.

"Zappa was a fan," say Dolenz. "Mike met him somewhere, and he saw what we were doing, and wanted to be part of it."

Zappa subsequently told an interviewer that he thought The Monkees were better than 90 per cent of the music coming from San Francisco. "In fact, he asked me to drum for The Mothers Of Invention after The Monkees were finished," continues Dolenz. "Sometimes I wish I'd taken up the offer, but I couldn't because I was still under contract."

"With the possible exception of Victor Mature," Rafelson says of the unique guest stars in the film, "everyone else was sort of a loser, a bad guy, someone who'd been condemned."

Alamy, Rex

Rafelson reels them off: The Mothers Of Invention; Sonny Liston, the heavyweight who'd been knocked out by Cassius Clay; Annette Funicello, who was considered a bit of a joke because she was a Mickey Mouse Club girl; T.C. Jones, who was the first famous female impersonator in America; Carol Doda, the woman who gets knocked out in the ring, who was one of the first women to dance topless in '60s San Francisco clubs.

"All these people represented what The Monkees were in some way, shape, or form," he says. "People had condemned them and yet they were heroes in other ways."

Most of these strange guest stars are now dead or indisposed.

"The guest actors were sort of losers, bad guys, the condemned."

Bob Rafelson, producer

June Fairchild, who is seen early in the film kissing all four Monkees and later threatens to jump from a building, was in the early '00s living on LA's Skid Row and died in poverty in 2015.

Then there's that cliche that if you can remember the '60s, you really didn't experience them. The memories of the various principals who made Head are often conflicting and selective at best. All parties agree, however, that a weekend trip to an Ojai, California resort in late '67 was the genesis for the film, though only Davy Jones recalled the retreat included "smoking, like, a ton of pot".

Dolenz: "There was just the four of us plus Bob, Bert, and Jack. We just talked for two days. It seemed to be more about what we didn't want to make. A basic rambling about *everything*. Jack was trying to get a sense of who we were. Now that I see the movie, it's clear they were looking to make a deconstruction of The Monkees [and] a deconstruction of Hollywood as well."

"To some degree, I was parodying Hollywood," says Rafelson. "But I was also saying, I'll probably never get the chance to make a movie again, so I'm going to make every movie this time out. Ojai was a sort of group therapy session. But Jack was dumbfounded when The Monkees said things like, 'We're better actors than Marlon Brando.' Jack said, 'Jesus, who are these guys? They're out of their minds.' I said, 'Just be patient, Jack. They all have their virtues, they'll do everything quite well.'"

Jones: "The Head experience has always baffled me. I never understood it. I didn't understand why we didn't get a writing credit. I was paid a thousand dollars for it. And we co-wrote it."

Dolenz: "I think it was Mike who said, 'What's going to happen when we make this movie? What are the credits going to be?' Jack or Bob or somebody said, 'Well, Jack Nicholson is going to write this movie.' Mike said, 'We should get some sort of credit because we've been instrumental in constructing this movie.' So there was a huge battle about this. Mike Nesmith took the tapes [of the weekend's conversations] and put them in the trunk of his car and wouldn't give them up. *(Laughs)* Michael did eventually surrender the tapes and, indeed, we didn't write the screenplay. Jack did. I've often felt that we should've received some sort of credit because all of us did have a lot to do with the content and spirit of that film. At the very least, it was about us. Not just The Monkees [but] us as individuals and people."

Rafelson: "They wanted everything. They were kids. They didn't know anything about movies. Yeah, they wanted a writing credit – but, my goodness, Mr. Nicholson was dumbfounded as to why they would want any kind of credit. Now, their recollection is probably quite different because they think they invented themselves. Since I was inspired to make a movie about The Monkees, they may have thought they deserved it. But the truth is there was little I learned in Ojai that I didn't already know."

Tork: "Nowadays I'm of the opinion that the people who did the hard work deserved the credit. Essentially, ideas are worth nothing. We had ideas and we contributed them. But we didn't write. So we don't deserve a writing credit. That's all there is to it." ➢

SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 11, 1968, THE FIRST day of shooting saw another snag that Rafelson had to deal with before filming began.

"Mike was certainly the shop steward of The Monkees during that whole period," explains Dolenz. "He introduced us to an agent called Jerry Perenchio, now one of the most successful men in the business. He said, 'You guys are really getting ripped off in a lot of different ways.' So he encouraged us to strike. Peter, unfortunately, did not agree. He was the scab, so to speak. That took the wind out of the sails of our opportunity."

Tork: "I felt it was another power play by Mike. It was strange because I was raised a labour progressive. If ever there was a guy who understood the dynamics of labour organising, it was me. What Mike meant was, 'Let me be the boss.' The other three did stay out for the first day of shooting, and basically Bert allowed a little trade-off and gave them a face-saving concession. But I got paid nothing for Head. I was given a piece of the action and it died. I'm not bitter. So Davy got $1,000 more than I did!"

Rafelson: "I got into a fistfight with Perenchio over this. Threw him down a flight of stairs, and said, 'You win. Take The Monkees! They're not going to be in the movie. We'll cancel it.' I'd been waiting all my life to make a movie, but I said, I will not let my partner negotiate under a gun. This guy was trying to hold up the movie."

All this animosity guaranteed that the paranoia depicted in the film was inherent on the set although some, such as Toni Basil (who choreographed Head's musical numbers and would later appear in Easy Rider and Five Easy Pieces), remember the environment as anything but tense. "It was a wonderful experience, just the opposite of paranoia," she recalls. "Bob gave everyone a lot of creative control."

However, Tork has frequently said that Rafelson was "uncharitable" during filming. Jack Nicholson's biographer Patrick McGilligan reported that the director would do derisive things like play Buffalo Springfield on set and say: "That's *real* rock'n'roll, man!"

"Well, he never did that to me," says Tork. "But my personal belief is that Bob is an evil-minded man. He likes to bring people down. Bob was often unsupportive as a human being and distinctly negative – and I was on the short end of that. There's one example [in the film] – where Ray Nitschke, the football player, keeps hitting me. He's doing his best to hit me but not to give it all he's got because if he does, I'm a squashed bug. So this guy's one of the toughest men in football, he's coming at me and I'm scared [but] figure it's good to be scared because that's what an actor should do. But Bob goes: 'Ha, ha, ha, ha! Look at Peter! He's scared! Ha, ha, ha!' I was just about to kick him in the balls. It was like, For fuck's sake, Rafelson! You're making fun of me because I'm scared? How do you think that's going to affect the quality of your movie, pal? I was so angry!"

Falling in: The Monkees join the army at Columbia's Culver City studios; (left) scenes from the film.

"In a way, it was my farewell to The Monkees," says Rafelson. "I mean, the movie begins and ends with them committing a kind of symbolic suicide. I was trying to expose the myth [of] the TV show. The movie portrays them with not so much sweetness and brightness. It's a much heavier and far-out thinking group. I wouldn't call it 'uncharitable'. I thought it was expanding my sense of who they were. For example, in one of the many movies The Monkees kept getting shoved into during their acid trip-like spiritual evolution, there's a boxing scene in which Micky says, 'Take this, you dummy.' Suddenly the music changes and Peter appears in the corner, Christ-like, and says, 'Micky, I'm the dummy. I'm always the dummy.'

"Now the point was that he was always asked to be the dummy so here he is acknowledging it," he continues. "But he's also the one who's given the longest speech in the movie about spiritual evolution, which he's learned from the guru in the steam room. So I was

Marty Eck Archives

"When the band went on strike, I got in a fistfight with their agent and threw him down the stairs." Bob Rafelson

trying to give him a chance to be himself, but in a symbolic way. He is that way today, by the way. In other words, The Monkees became what they really were."

"I was as anxious to get away from that whole squeaky-clean, bubblegum image as anybody else," says Dolenz. "I didn't want to quit, but I'm still proud of Head because we got to do something that wasn't so controlled and censored."

"I've seen it dozens of times," says Tork. "I have some mixed feelings about it. There are some good bits in it, but, as an overall movie, I don't know how good I think it is."

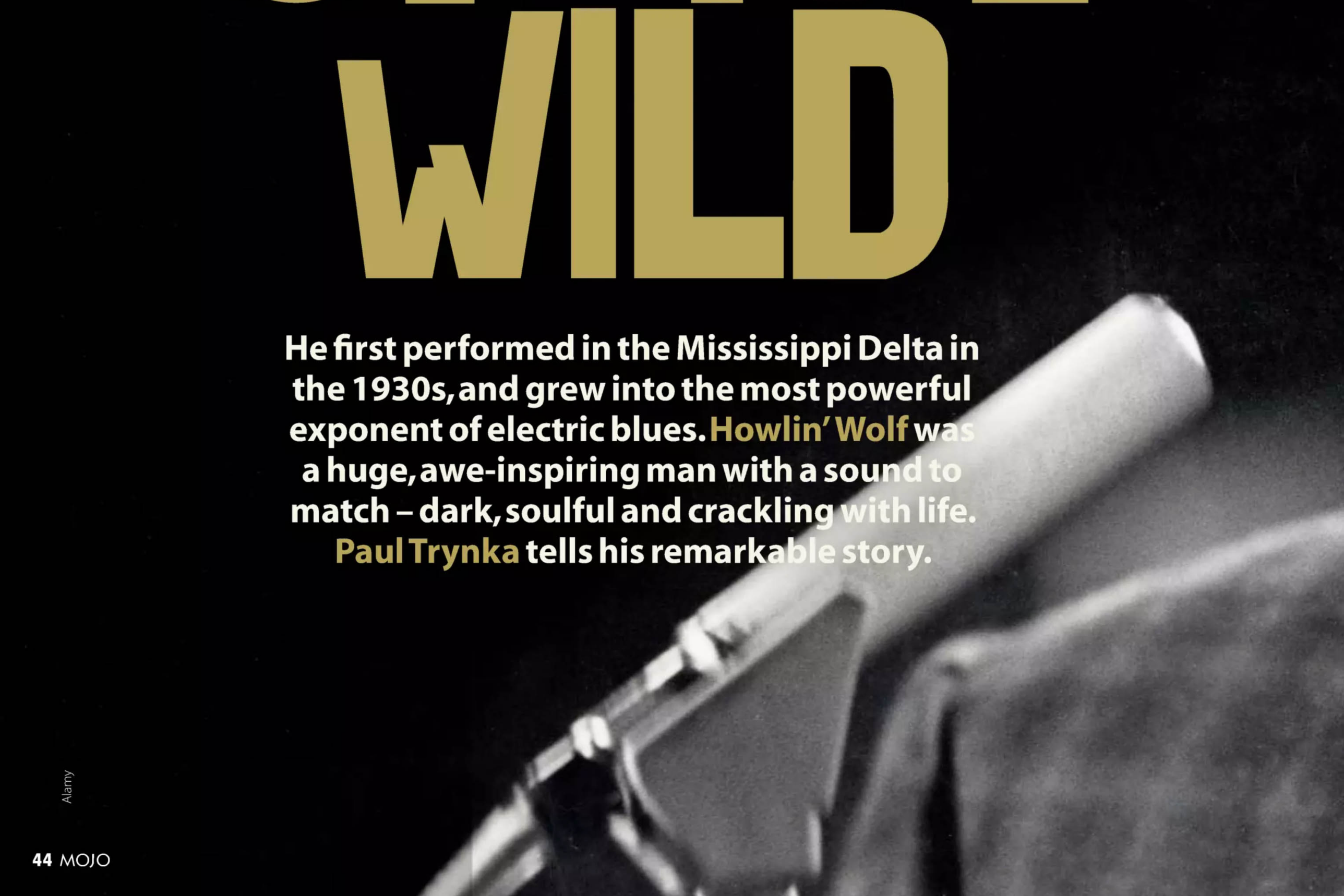
Jones: "I only began to understand [later]. I've since recommended it to many people – not for my performance, because I was still playing 'Davy'. But I have so much more admiration for it now that I'm a little more aware of what it takes to make a film."

"Jack loves Head," says Rafelson. "He still quotes lines from the film to me on a daily basis. 'Howzabout some more steam?' Or 'Everybody's where they want to be.' What I personally find rewarding about Head is that people still care about it. That the movie has somehow or other recovered from the bad reception it originally received and is now regarded as something unique, something that led the way. It's always nice to have a revisionist opinion. I've never seen any of my movies. The only one of them that I could see on TV if it came on – and I could watch five minutes of it – would be Head. Because who can remember what the fuck comes next in that movie?"

Thanks to following for their help: Harvey Kubernik, Rodney Bingenheimer, Mike Villano and Denny Bruce.

THE CALL OF THE WILD

He first performed in the Mississippi Delta in the 1930s, and grew into the most powerful exponent of electric blues. Howlin' Wolf was a huge, awe-inspiring man with a sound to match – dark, soulful and crackling with life. Paul Trynka tells his remarkable story.



Alamy

HUBERT SUMLIN SHUFFLED THROUGH A PILE OF LETTERS, PHOTOS and cuttings before one of them caught his eye. "Hey, this is from when they put Wolf on a stamp. The mayor of our city got me down for a ceremony, to honour me! Can you believe it? Things change, man. I never thought it would happen in a million years, but, hey, I am glad it did."

When MOJO visited Sumlin, 15 years or so before his death in 2011, the wood-panelled basement of his neat little house in Milwaukee was crammed with memorabilia from two decades of playing lead guitar with Howlin' Wolf. Hundreds of photos filled the walls: Hubert being feted by politicians, or being hugged by Stevie Ray Vaughan or Robert Plant ("Don't know who that guy is, but he was real friendly, gave me that picture himself"). Stacks of CDs lined the shelves: Charley Patton and Robert Johnson records that Sumlin first heard back in the '30s when he was playing an improvised one-string guitar, or Wolf box sets which unearth long-forgotten sessions from the '50s. "I couldn't believe they had this material left, man!" he chuckled. "And all this stuff by people I heard when I was a little bitty kid, all these records I done forgot, man! "These people, they paid their dues and this is something that's going to help the young generation to think, Hey man, people you didn't thought would make it, taught you things. When you gone, people think about you. I think that's great. It shows if you mean what you say and you mean what you do, everything is all right. Tell the truth. I think they proved themselves to the people, and if you want to be a hero, you can be what you want to be."

Forty years after his death, Howlin' Wolf's '50s recordings are still a totem of authenticity, employed to sell jeans or beer. But repetition has not tamed the Wolf's howl. His music came from the wellspring of American music, sourced directly from the plantation of the Mississippi Delta where many believe the blues began. Yet Howlin' Wolf the surly country boy was also an iconoclast – he was one of the first musicians to unleash electric guitars on the world, thus providing a starting point for Jimi Hendrix, who signalled that he was picking up where Wolf had left off by opening his 1967 Monterey set with Wolf's Killing Floor.

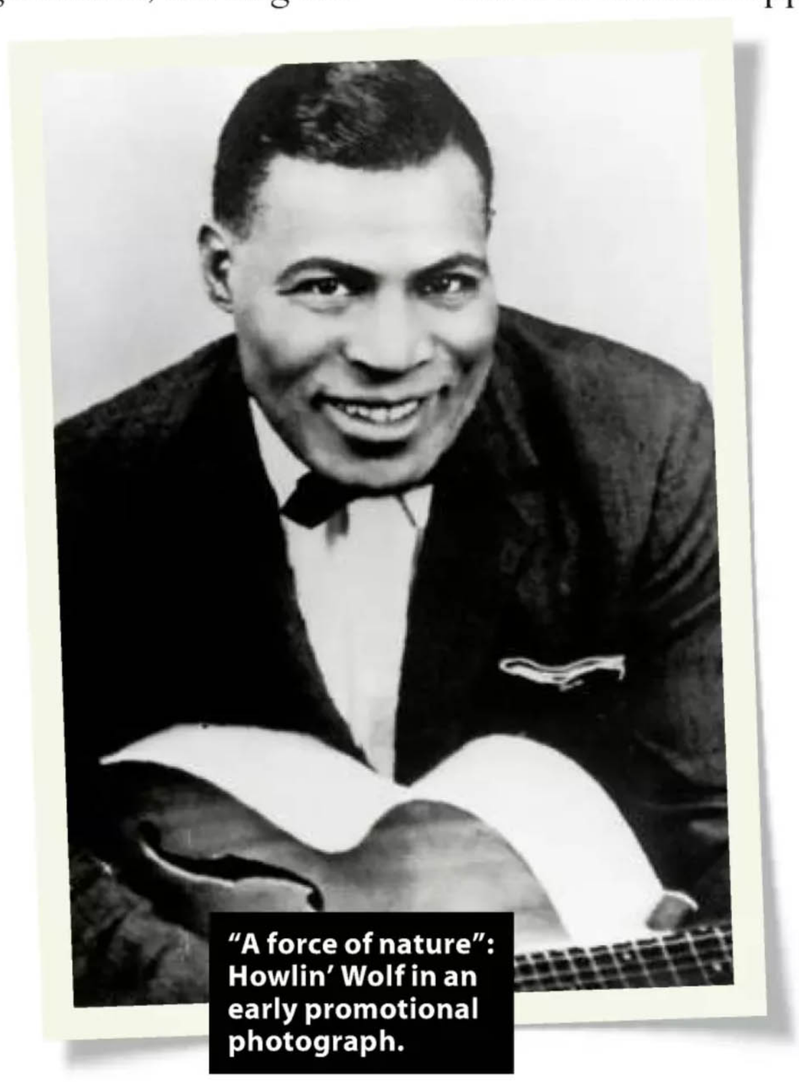
Wolf and Hendrix met with similar misconceptions. In the '60s there were many musicians who elected to believe Hendrix's appeal came from having a big dick rather than his great command of guitar and recording techniques. Back in the '50s, Howlin' Wolf had met with similarly patronising assessments.

Described by Sam Phillips as "a force of nature", Wolf was in reality far more complex. He learned his trade from the most far-out musicians of the '30s such as Robert Johnson, and went on to run his own group as a ruthlessly efficient organisation, heading one of the first fully electric outfits in the Mississippi Delta. His symphonies on Chess combine proto-metal riffs with off-the-wall bebop rhythms, and were used as blueprints by everyone from Led Zeppelin to The Rolling Stones, Captain Beefheart to Tom Waits. And 10 years before Bob Dylan first opened up the imagery of rock lyrics, Wolf was using surreal allusions and dark metaphors that came from both black folklore and the recesses of his own psyche. When John Lennon was asking to hold his baby's hand, Wolf was complaining that he'd asked for water, and his woman gave him gasoline. When Mick Jagger was asking his girlfriend to tell him she was coming back, Wolf was howling about how he'd been left on the killing floor – the bloody slaughter zone familiar to almost every inhabitant of South Side Chicago, who'd either worked in the huge local abattoirs or could hear the animals squealing above the bustle of South 64th Street.

No shambling cottonpicker, Wolf was hip, as he had to be in the ruthlessly cut-throat arena of '40s and '50s American black music. Wolf and his band didn't go electric because of some theory about tonality and urban angst. They went electric so they could blow their horn-oriented jump blues rivals off the stage. They were the baddest motherfuckers around and made cutting-edge pop music.

DOWN IN MISSISSIPPI, ON HIGHWAY 8 BETWEEN Cleveland and Ruleville, lies the Dockery Plantation, where Henry Sloan and Charley Patton held court more than a century ago. Sloan and Patton were both playing what we'd now call blues at the very beginning of the 20th century, and if the origins of this complex music can be traced to any one location, then this flat, seemingly barren area is it. Just a few miles away is the crossroads where, according to Mississippi legend, Robert Johnson made his faustian pact. The devil walked close in this area of Mississippi, a place where travelling musicians were in constant danger of being jailed as vagrants and where the Ku Klux Klan were active. Will Dockery's farm was one of the more enlightened plantations, where black men and women could work and play with little interference, and it became a centre for social gatherings, as well as a stop-over for passing musicians.

Howlin' Wolf's family moved from Clay County to Ruleville in the early '20s. Born Chester Arthur Burnett on June 10, 1910, Wolf used to tell various stories about how he'd won his name; his favourite was that his daddy had killed a wolf and brought it home to show his son. Young Chester was terrified by the fearsome carcass and learned to imitate a wolf's howl so he could scare off any of its companions that might be out to get him. Soon after his arrival in Ruleville the young Wolf started to hang around with Patton, who was as much showman as a



"A force of nature": Howlin' Wolf in an early promotional photograph.

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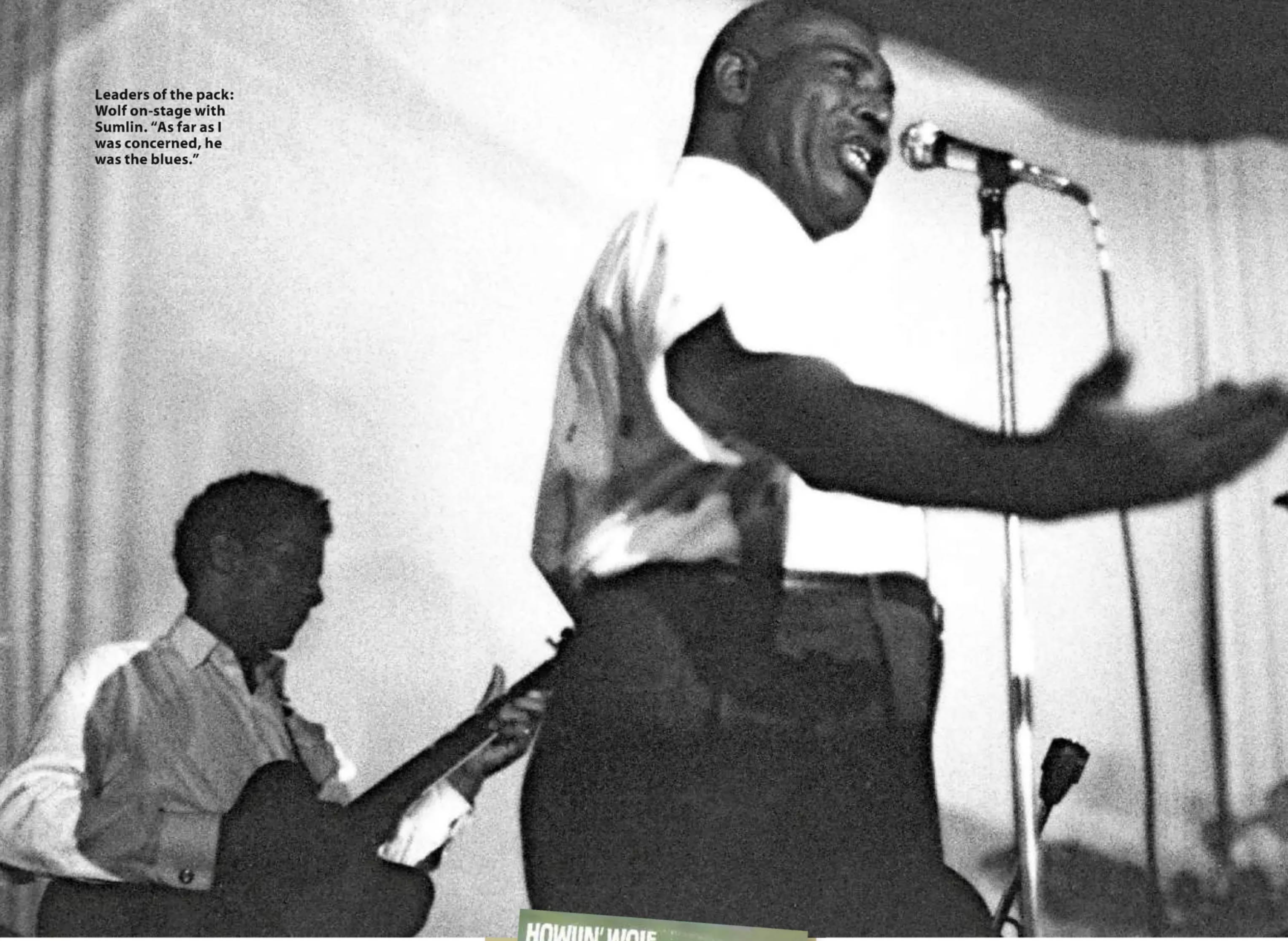

Leaders of the pack: Wolf on-stage with Sumlin. "As far as I was concerned, he was the blues."

blues singer, playing his guitar behind his head or even, for the right audience, humping it, starting a tradition which would be taken up by Guitar Slim, Johnny 'Guitar' Watson and Jimi Hendrix. Burnett absorbed Patton's stagecraft as well as his guitar playing.

Roebuck 'Pops' Staples, who provided the soundtrack to the civil rights movement with his family group The Staple Singers, was one of many Dockery workers who saw Wolf and Patton play the local fish fries and picnics. Brought up on the upper Dockery plantation, the young Roebuck Staples was a skilled horseman, respected in the neighbourhood and looked over by a hardworking father who made sure his son never came into contact with the white man: "My daddy was one person they didn't pick on. He knew how to farm and he knew how to work, and he didn't allow the white man to ride over him. My grandfather was a slave, but my father never would live on a plantation that had people telling him what to do. So we didn't have that problem.

"Only thing was, my daddy thought the blues was the devil's music. Wouldn't even let me play the guitar, said that was the instrument of the devil, too. So I'd sneak out of the house, and that's how I saw Charley Patton and Wolf, when I was 12 or 13. It would be where someone had a big house, and on Saturday night they'd organise a dance. Ladies would be cooking chicken and chitlin' in the kitchen, and they'd have a room for gambling, playing cards, drinking bootleg liquor, and a big room out in front where they'd play and dance.

"Charley and me was on the same plantation, he'd always be playing there, and Wolf came along later. Wolf was my main man. Charley Patton was a good man, far as I know; I was young and didn't know about his life or anything. But Wolf, I thought he was the greatest thing. A big guy, a real tall handsome man, he was really something else. He was just a few years older than me, but he was so powerful I wouldn't even dare to speak to him. They were already calling him 'Wolf' then. He was playing with Charley, I think he was maybe playing Charley's songs, but he was something different altogether. As far as I was concerned, he was the blues."

Whatever Wolf's promise in those early years, in his own eyes he threw it away. Hubert Sumlin: "His time was too short, man, on earth. He told me he was 40 years too late, I didn't know what he meant at first. One night we was riding from Chicago in the bus with all the band, everybody sleeping but me and him, and he come to telling me what he meant. He say, his mother put him out on account he wouldn't work and his uncle raised him. He was almost 40 years old, I believe, before Sonny Boy met his sister and he realised what he wanted to do. He said he started at 40, and that was 40 years too late."

From the mid '20s to the mid '30s, Wolf worked outside of music, and was only ➢

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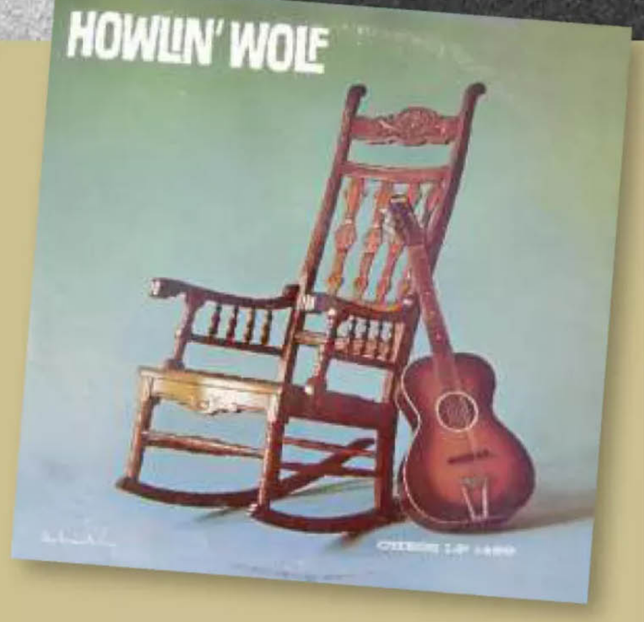


Wolf Power

Rocking Chair and the British blues boom.

Wolf's keynote album (titled *Howlin' Wolf* but known as *Rocking Chair*) featured, mostly, bassist Willie Dixon classics fired up by Hubert Sumlin on guitar and Sam Lay's drums, but it's that voice that grips – a big, menacing instrument to cut through the meanest crowd. When the tracks, recorded at Chess between 1957-61, started to filter across the Atlantic in the late '50s, they became a powerful influence on the British blues boom. Most obviously, the Stones covered The Red Rooster as Little Red Rooster, but Led Zeppelin's Whole Lotta Love was a proper Willie Dixon stew using his You Need Love (Muddy Waters) for riffs and this album's Shake For Me and Back Door Man for phrases of Plant's vocal ("Shake for me girl/I wanna be your back door man"). Wang Dang Doodle, Spoonful... consciously or not, every rock band has been influenced by Wolf's collar-grabbing approach.

No messing: with Epiphone and a bottle of Ancient Age whiskey, San Francisco, 1968.

➢ dragged away from farming by Little Boy Blue – Alex Rice Miller, an irascible card-shark operator and harmonica player who would call himself Sonny Boy Williamson (probably to siphon some success from the already-famous, Chicago-based harmonica player John Lee 'Sonny Boy' Williamson, who died in 1948).

Williamson liked to ramble. He'd hit the road playing harmonica with the by-now legendary Robert Johnson, as well as with Johnson's protege Robert Lockwood, and was fast becoming a well-known figure in the incestuous music scene of the upper Delta. He played up and down Mississippi, from Gulfport in the South up to Brownsville, Tennessee, 400 miles to the north. Williamson never seemed to keep his accompanists for too long, and after he'd taken up with Burnett's half-sister Mary, he persuaded Burnett to accompany him on guitar for some dates around Arkansas and Mississippi. Later on, Burnett accompanied both Johnson and Lockwood, two of the most consummate guitarists in the Delta, who were both capable of throwing a polka or hillbilly number into their set, but could also deliver some of the darkest, most fully realised and intense blues that had ever been made. But where Johnson and Lockwood were happy to ramble from town to town, evading irate plantation owners and the law, Burnett's religious, farm-based upbringing kept calling him back to the land. In and out of music over the next few years, Wolf wouldn't commit himself fully to music until he returned from military service in 1946, and immersed himself in the crazy bustle of Memphis, then the site of some of the most momentous developments in the history of popular music.

"He was really a quiet kind of guy but if people gave him trouble, he'd give 'em trouble back." James Cotton

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE, 1948. A huge, strangled, hoarse, warm, rich, throaty voice crackles out of thousands of Crosley and Emerson radios from Helena, Arkansas to Holly Springs, Mississippi: "This is the Wolf comin' at ya from KWEM in West Memphis, your only real home for the real down-home blues…"

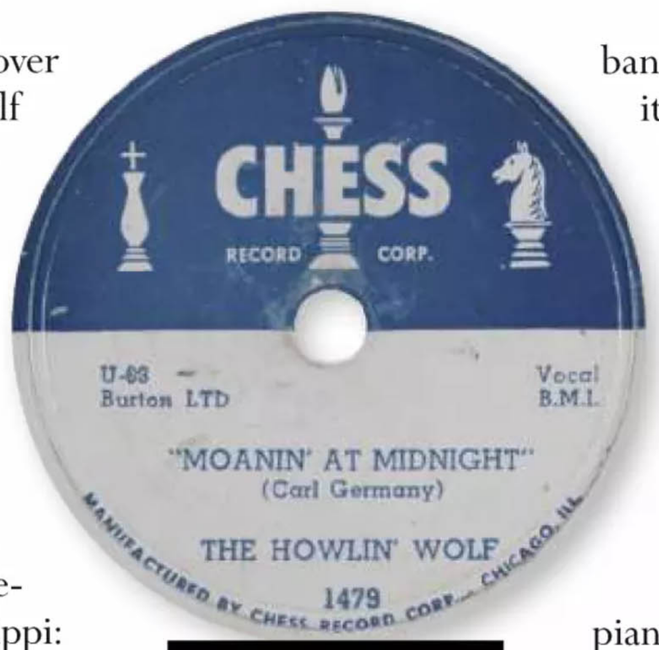
"It was the radio started everything off round here," rasps James Cotton in his trademark throaty Mississippi drawl. "Sonny Boy was the first one, then I ended up in Wolf's band on KWEM when I was 12 or 13. We did 15 minutes a day sponsored by House Of Bread. I had my own show too, later on. Poole's Discount Motors in Memphis bought the time – it was a favour to you, to get people to hear your music, and we helped sell them lots of cars."

Cotton has seen his fair share of cities playing the blues. He moved from Tunica, Mississippi to Helena, Arkansas to play harmonica with Sonny Boy Williamson's groundbreaking electric band in the early '40s, then later spent 10 years playing in Muddy Waters' legendary Chicago band, before moving to San Francisco with Paul Butterfield in 1967. But now he's back in his spiritual home – a bar on Beale Street, Memphis. Even though it's now a commercial shell overrun by white tourists, this is the street that was the centre of Southern black culture back in the '40s. This is the city where electric blues was created in 1939, when Robert Lockwood fitted a Montgomery Ward pick-up to his guitar and started using it on his dates with Sonny Boy Williamson, effectively establishing the rock'n'roll format of electric guitar, vocals and drums, before spreading the new sound across the South on the King Biscuit Time radio show. This is the city where blues was beaming out from stations like WDIA and KWEM from the '40s, planting the seeds that would germinate into rock'n'roll. This is the city where what we know as Chicago electric blues really originated.

"When I got to Memphis in the '40s, they still had jug bands in Handy Park," croaks Cotton, settling back and ordering a couple more Budweisers. "If you wanted to amount to anything, this is where you came. Everybody was here: Wolf, BB, Walter Horton, Roscoe Gordon, Ike Turner, and other guys you don't hear nothin' about now, like Willie Love. It was Sonny Boy introduced me to Wolf. He was really a quiet kind of guy who liked people to leave him alone, but if they gave him trouble he'd give 'em trouble back. Sometimes you had to be mean back then, the way everything was.

"This was a great place to play, except when the clubs would try and get away without paying you. Down here was the main drag, you had cafes selling soul food, guys shining shoes, guys telling jokes, guys going up and down the street tapdancing. We had the Handy Theater then, and a hotel called The Sunbeam where we'd have Blue Mondays and play all day and all night. This was the kinda city that was filled with people who don't work, and they just got money anyway, you know what I mean? It was happening and it was all black. I'm not being racist when I say that, I'm just telling it like it was.

"Soon as I got with Wolf he was electric, way before everybody 'cept Sonny Boy and his band. Round here there's so many musicians that it's real competitive and you're up against these big bands with the saxophones. Now Wolf would never let anybody outdo him on-stage; that's where the tail-dragging and everything came from, and the band was the same. No one was gonna cut us. 'Scuse my language, but with the amplifiers and everything we could go up against a nine-piece band and blow the motherfuckers right off the stage. We annihilated them, man.



Moanin' At Midnight, recorded with Sam Phillips in 1951, gave Howlin' Wolf his first chart hit.

"It was Ike Turner got us recording. He played piano and was acting as some kind of talent scout for the Sun label. They was paying him to find people to record, so we went in there and recorded Moanin' At Midnight and How Many More Years. It was a little old room, we just played how we felt and Sam Phillips kept himself busy getting the microphones right. We didn't think we were making a new sound or anything, we were just playing the way we played. Sam Phillips got real excited, he was real friendly and far as I was concerned he was a real nice person. Then times changed and I don't know where things went from there, 'cos I did four songs for him and never got any money. That was way before you ever heard of Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins or Jerry Lee Lewis. Then Wolf decided he was gonna go up to Chicago, so he left Willie behind and took Hubert along with him. That was the last I saw of them 'til I got to Chicago."

Sam Phillips had sent tapes from Wolf's first sessions both to Chess in Chicago and Modern in California, causing a contractual dispute which dragged on until February 1952. Over the intervening months, Wolf would cut with Sam Phillips in Memphis for Chess, and with Ike Turner in West Memphis for Modern, but it was the Chess version of Moanin' At Midnight that became a hit, catapulting Wolf into the vanguard of a new movement.

Wolf, Muddy Waters and John Lee Hooker represented a radical realignment of the blues, combining a back-to-basics traditional Delta blues approach with electric instrumentation and a powerful dance-orientated beat. "It was a complete change," says Billy Boy Arnold, who at the time was playing on the Chicago streets with Bo Diddley. "In 1948 the major artists on the scene were people ➢

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like Memphis Minnie, Big Bill Broonzy and John Lee Williamson. But by 1952 the scene had changed drastically, and I mean drastically. Muddy and John Lee were the first, then Wolf came on the scene, and the electric sound had taken over. From then on you had BB King, Guitar Slim, Elmore James, all of them electric; and Big Bill Broonzy and those guys who had been on the scene for 30 years just faded out."

Wolf's records were state-of-the-art and instantly put him on a level with Muddy Waters, who had only just started using a full electric band on record. If anything Wolf's records had even more poke, combining Wolf's monstrous voice with a radical new aggression and vibrancy epitomised by Willie Johnson's searing over-amplified electric guitar. By the end of 1952, Wolf was ready to make the move to Chicago, where he could record in Chess' own studios, and where there was seemingly limitless work in the South and West Side clubs. But Johnson, a major architect of Wolf's sound, would remain in West Memphis. "It wasn't no surprise," says Cotton. "Willie and Wolf would just argue all the time like cat and dog, and Willie could be pretty mean, too. It just got to be too much trouble for the old man."

JOHNSON'S REPLACEMENT, HUBERT SUMLIN, would become Wolf's greatest collaborator. A young pup who Burnett regarded as practically an adopted son, Sumlin had been hanging out in Memphis with James Cotton and Pat Hare before he got the call from Wolf.

"I was just a little bitty old boy and I come by this old warped record in this old garbage pile, and I put this record on and it was so warped, really wooh waaah, I said, Oh shoot, and then it sounded all right," Sumlin told MOJO. "I asked my daddy who it was, and he said this is a guy died before you was born – Charley Patton. Later on, Wolf told me that was how he started out too as a little old boy, listening to Charley Patton.

"I played with James Cotton. He had this little band in West Memphis, Arkansas. Wolf was already established and I was just this little old boy checking him out. Scared me to death he did. Then one day I'm staying with Cotton at this old hotel and I get this call from Wolf. He said, 'Hubert, I'm putting this band down and I'm going to Chicago and forming me a new group, 'cos these guys, they think they're too good, they don't wanna play.' I said OK. Like that. I didn't believe him. I really didn't. So Cotton said, 'Hey man, you know he meant what he said?' I said, Hey, I sure hope so.

"He stayed on top of things. When you went to see Wolf he'd

"Sure enough, two weeks later he calls up the hotel, tells me the train leaves at so-and-so time and you are going to be met by Otis Spann, Muddy Waters' piano player. And that's what happened. I packed my little suitcase, gets on the train and finally arrives at the big ol' Illinois Station on 12th Street. Otis Spann met me, man, I got to see all these big lights, and I got scared, so we went straight back to Leonard Chess's daddy's apartment building. Wolf had his own apartment there, he got me an apartment there and had done got my union card and everything. So the second day, me and Wolf we done had lunch, and he starts to telling me how this worked, how that worked, and we're sitting around the apartment going over the numbers, and I got to like that old man. I was kind of scared of him at first, he was so big and huge, you know what I'm talking about, but that didn't last long – he was just like a little baby if anybody knowed him, man."

Wolf ran his band like a machine, dictating what clothes they should wear, paying their union dues, finding them accommodation, and, in Sumlin's case, organising guitar lessons: "I had just started playing with him, man, and I wasn't seasoned good enough, and Wolf said, 'Hey Hubert, tomorrow I want you to go with me, I'm gonna show you something I think you're going to like.' He took me downtown to the Chicago Conservatory Of Music, where Wolf took lessons, and he paid for two years of lessons for me. It was some opera guitar player, name was Gowalski, he was playing

Rivals: with Muddy Waters, around 1968 when they recorded *The Super Super Blues Band* with Bo Diddley.

Animal magic: Wolf on Shindig! in 1965, with the Stones and Darlene Love.

be on that stage kicking ass all night long." Billy Boy Arnold

symphonies over in Europe and now he's teaching me scales and stuff! 'Cept I only took six months' lessons 'cos the guy dropped dead right in front of me of a heart attack. But with what he taught me and what I knew, I made out."

Although Wolf had a reputation in Chicago for whupping any musicians who didn't toe his line, most musicians who worked with him considered him the best bandleader in the city. Jimmy Rogers, Muddy Waters' long-term guitarist, remembered: "Wolf was better at managing a bunch of people than Muddy or anybody else. Muddy would go along with the Chess company, Wolf would speak up for himself – and when you speak up for yourself you're automatically gonna speak up for the band." As Billy Boy Arnold, a regular on the Chicago club circuit puts it: "The difference with Wolf was, if you played in Wolf's band and got fired or quit you could draw unemployment compensation. If you walked up to Muddy and said something like unemployment compensation they'd think you were crazy. Wolf would be sitting in the corner with his spectacles on in the intermission, studying his book; he went to night school, he took music lessons, he was always trying to advance.

"He was a guy stayed on top of things. When you went to see Wolf he would be on that stage kicking ass all night long. I used to play in clubs with Muddy in the late '50s, and Muddy used to let Cotton run his show – he would only come on for the last few numbers. Muddy was a great artist, but he became less of a draw in the Chicago clubs than Wolf, until the white audiences came along and rescued him."

As bandleaders in a city famed for cut-throat musical competition, it was perhaps inevitable that the rivalry between Waters and Wolf would develop into open enmity. Waters originally welcomed Wolf, but by the mid '50s the King of Chicago blues was becoming increasingly fearful that Wolf would steal his crown. "Muddy and Wolf, they really had a feud going," said Sumlin. "Those two were just like the McCoys, man!" The rivalry extended to arguments over who got the best songs from the Chess house songwriter, Willie Dixon, and constant attempts to poach the other's best musicians. In 1956 Waters pulled off a particularly satisfying coup. "We were playing the Zanzibar," said Sumlin, "and Muddy sent his chauffeur over in his Cadillac, the chauffeur had on diamonds and everything, and I'm looking at this big roll of money, I ain't saw so much in all my days. Muddy done sent him over there to bribe me, man! He's telling me, 'Muddy say he'll triple the money that Wolf paying you, what do you want to do?'

"Course when you're young you think money's everything, so I say all right, and I'm wondering how am I gonna tell Wolf. I got ➢

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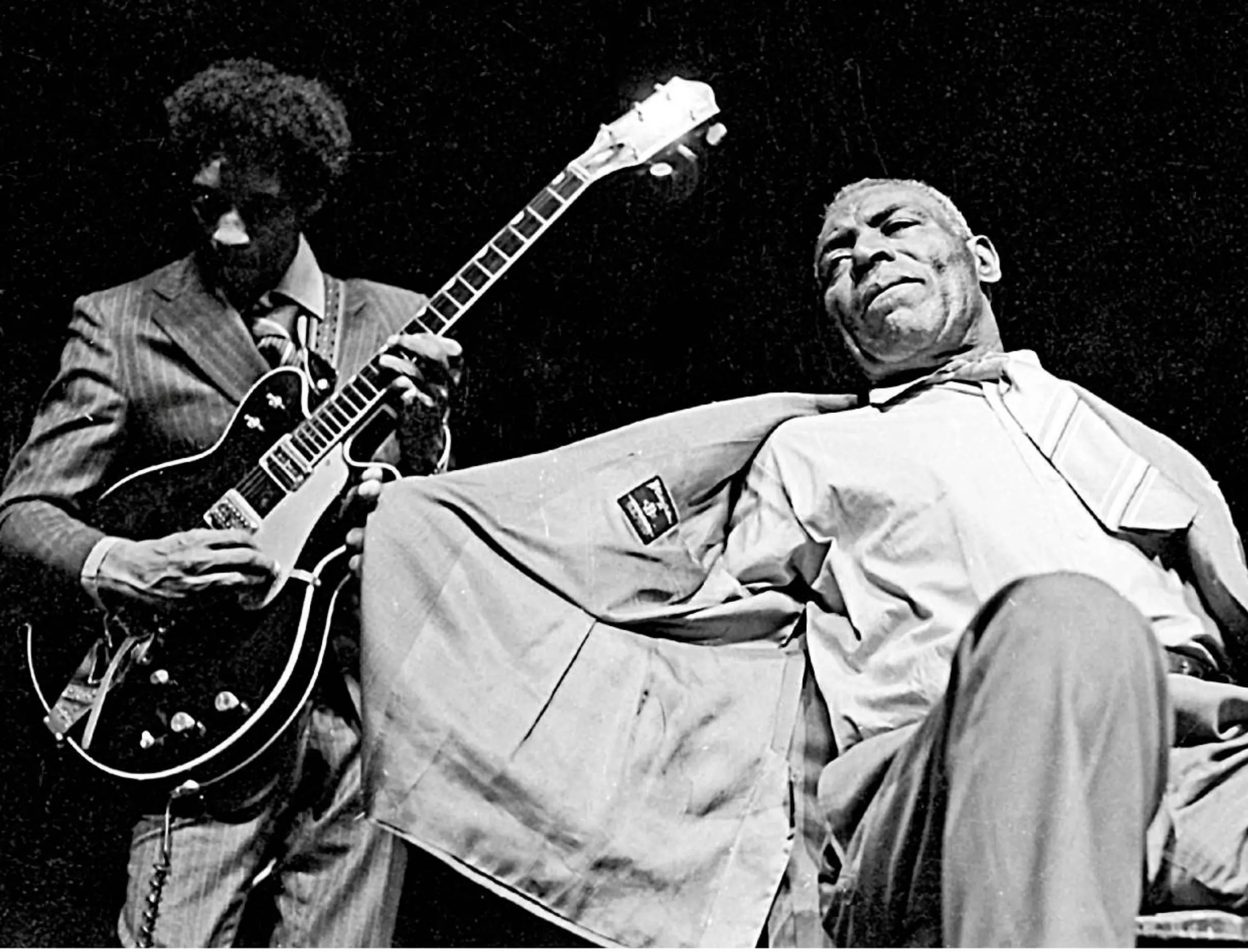

"I could never explain what seeing Wolf was like. I walked into a club and found this big man crawling around on his knees, dragging his tail, howling." Buddy Guy

this money, 400 and something dollars, and it's 10 minutes before we get ready to go back on the bandstand. The place is full of folk, jammed, so I goes in the bathroom to count my money and to think about what I am going to tell him. Shoot man, Wolf comes straight in there, and he done change colours, man – he got blacker! This guy got a ton of colour I ain't never seen a man turn. I say, Oh shit, he is gonna kill me, man! I didn't have to tell him 'bout how I was going with Mud, the guy knew already. He says to me, 'Get out of my sight, get your stuff off the bandstand now.' In the middle of the show! I takes my shit down, scared, trembling, just knowing I'm gonna get bopped any minute, and get out of there quick as I can. Mud's chauffeur must have had an idea what was going on, he's waiting on me outside, helps me put my amplifier in the trunk and drives me over to Sylvio's, where Muddy is at. Man, I cried a-a-a-all the way over there."

Willie Johnson came up from Memphis to retake his old position. But from the moment Sumlin joined the Waters camp, he started to miss Wolf's comparatively well-organised outfit, not least when the Waters band set out on an arduous tour of the South: "Mud told me we were leaving town, we're fixing to leave and he asked me did I have enough clothes, I said, 'Sure.' I had me one suit. He said, 'Is that all you got, just that one suit? You know we gonna be away about 40 days?' I'm going, 'What the…' This man ain't told me nothing about no 40 days.

"Man, that 40 days like to kill me. Some of them jobs was 1,000 miles apart man, nothing under 500 miles, 20 days out of the 40 didn't nobody get a chance to take a bath, 'cos by the time we arrive in the next town it's time to play. Man, we did so much driving, I got the haemorrhoids so bad I couldn't sit down! They brought me feather pillows that I had to sit on! We drove about 1,400 miles back to Chicago, and the moment I got back in town I called Wolf. I said, I got the haemorrhoids, this guy done work me 40 days and 40 nights. I am quitting Mud and I wanna go back with you. He said, 'You say you're comin' back?' I said, 'I'll be there in three minutes, man.'"

BUDDY GUY, CHICAGO'S BEST-KNOWN BLUESMAN, recalls, "I didn't come to this city to be anything, I came here to work in the day and watch people like Wolf at night – sit there and watch with one Coke [to last me] for six hours. I could never explain really what seeing Wolf was like. I had his records, 78s, then I walked into a club and found this big man crawling around on his knees, dragging his tail and howling like a wolf! Then you hold a conversation with him, and this guy's not

Tailor-made: on-stage with Sumlin. "If you mean what you say and you mean what you do, everything is all right."

faking this tone of voice, it's natural, and I'm saying, Oh my God – who am I? 'Cos I know who he was, and who am I to be talking to him? It's like I'm in heaven and I don't even know it.

"Chicago was a place nobody slept, it was a round-the-clock thing, the city buses was running all night and there was 1,000 nightclubs here, every one of them packed. We had the stockyard going 24 hours a day, the steel mill running 24 hours a day. I lived in Chicago for about five years and lost track of which was the weekend. I know we can't bring those days back, but I would be a happy man if we could only give those guys credit for what they done, for originating the music you're hearing now."

Buddy Guy's arrival in Chicago in the late '50s signalled the ascendance of a younger group of slicker, soul-oriented bluesmen including Magic Sam, Otis Rush and Guy himself, who threatened to supplant Wolf and Waters much as they had replaced their acoustic forebears a decade before. But rather than surrender to these young turks, Wolf incorporated them into his sound, using the likes of Buddy Guy or Freddie King to augment his recording group. The result was a string of records, many of them from the prolific songwriting pen of Willie Dixon, which combined Wolf's brutal delivery with innovative songs such as Wang Dang Doodle, Back Door Man, Spoonful or Killing Floor.

Wolf's classic run of singles from 1956 to 1964 would remain unsurpassed in the blues canon, scoring him hits with his black audience well into the '60s, and gradually percolating through a growing audience for R&B in Europe.

In a heart-warming demonstration of British good taste, Wolf's first crossover hit was scored in the British charts, when the Pye re-release of Smokestack Lightnin' reached Number 42 in June 1964. A bemused Wolf embarked on his second European tour shortly afterwards and, according to Sumlin, "as far as the old man was concerned, he thought he'd died and gone to heaven. Those people over there, they treated us like kings… In fact we got kinda spoilt as far as going back home."

Crossover success in Wolf's homeland proved more elusive, despite Chess's attempts to package their artists for the 'folk blues' audience. The real breakthrough would come via The Rolling Stones, who covered The Red Rooster in October '64 and engineered Wolf's appearance on the Shindig ABC-TV show in May 1965. The news that Wolf had appeared on national TV sent seismic ripples through Chicago's blues community, who for the first time became aware of the English bands covering their material. A few musicians were cynical about their motives. Not Wolf. "It was the light at the end of the tunnel," says Buddy Guy. "There was a boundary line which no one thought could be crossed, and The Rolling ➢

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Blues Explosion!

How a simple package tour devised by two German promoters provided Howlin' Wolf with his crowning glory in the UK. By Phil Alexander.

As the '60s dawned, the battle lines were clearly drawn between blues aficionados who'd come to the music via jazz and who preferred the acoustic, country blues of the '30s and '40s, and a younger generation that had gravitated towards the raucous, big city sounds typified by the hard-hitting records made in Chicago in the '50s. It was this latter constituency that saw Howlin' Wolf's *Rockin' Chair* album (see page 47) as a set text. It was also this audience that German promoters Horst Lippmann and Fritz Rau sought to appeal to when they created the first American Folk Blues Festival in 1962, designed to showcase the simple fact that the blues was still alive and well.

Informed first-hand of Chicago's fecund electric blues scene by German jazz author Joachim-Ernst Berendt who'd just returned from the Windy City, Lippmann and Frau – then in their early thirties – worked up the idea of a Europe-wide package tour. As the idea of a blues tour began to coalesce, Lippman – then also director of bi-monthly TV show, Jazz Heard And Seen, in Baden Baden – hit upon the idea of filming the acts, meaning he could also underwrite some of his touring costs with television money, as well as securing a platform by which he could promote his shows further. His enterprising approach means that a raft of footage of key blues artists remains intact to this day (released on three DVDs entitled The American Folk Blues Festival 1962-1966), their performances shot in a studio but against backdrops that are German interpretations of downhome Mississippi Delta scenes or Chicago street corner settings.

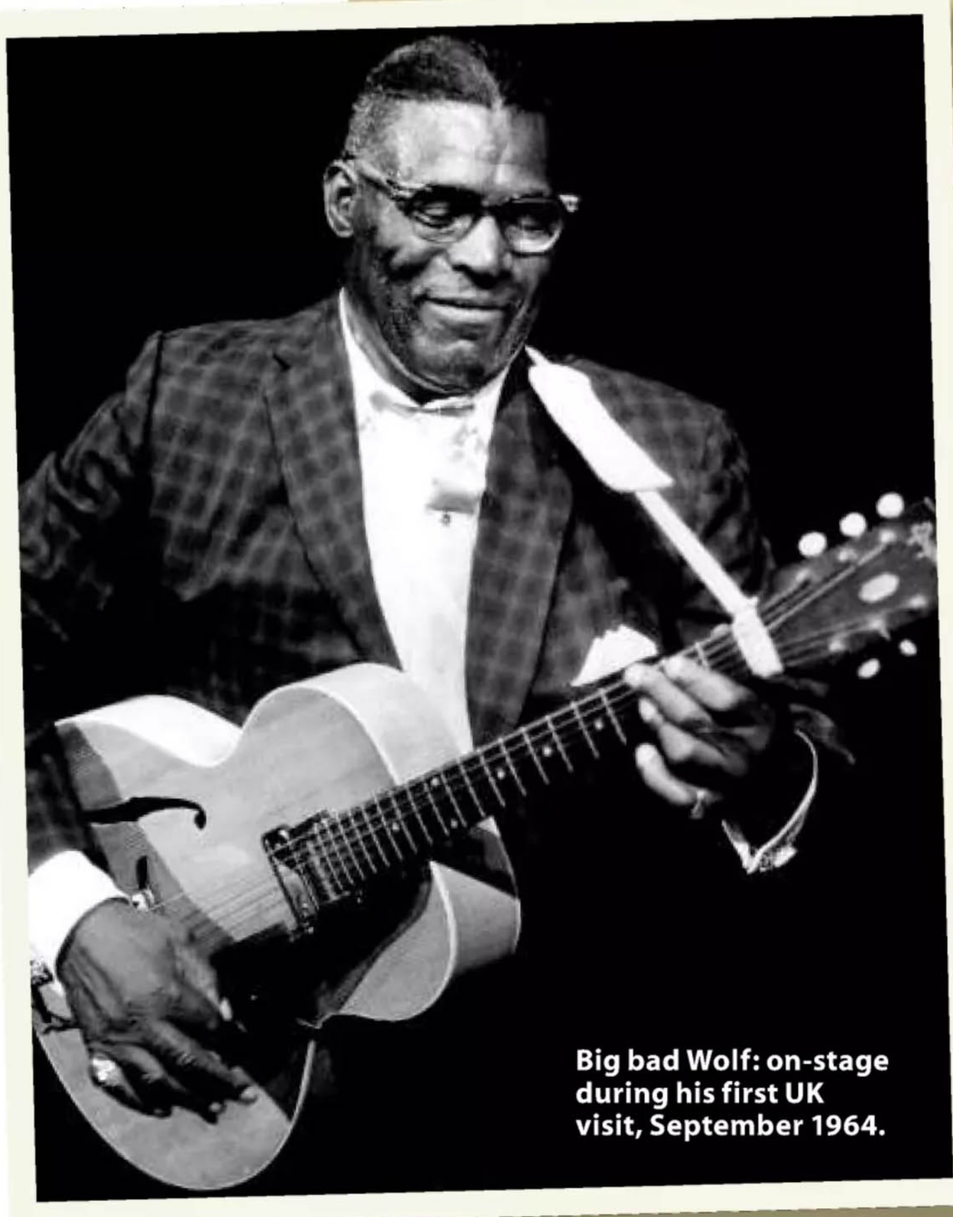
Lippmann was unable to travel to the States to see the acts for himself. As a result he recruited the services of local songwriter, bassist and Chess Records lynchpin Willie Dixon to corral the talent for the tour. Hence Dixon assembled an initial line-up of John Lee Hooker, T-Bone Walker, pianist Memphis Slim, drummer Jump Jackson, harmonica player Shakey Jake, singer Helen Humes, and folk blues duo Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee.

It was this bill that played the Manchester Free Trade Hall on October 22, 1962. In the audience were Keith Richards, Brian Jones, Mick Jagger and Jimmy Page, all of whom had made a pilgrimage up from London to see their heroes in a van hired by their record collector friend Dave Williams. If the records that the aspiring British musicians had heard had inspired them, then nothing had quite prepared them for the showmanship and power they witnessed from the performers themselves. Guitarist T-Bone Walker was undoubtedly the star of the show, playing at volume and playing his guitar behind his head when the mood took him. A finale involving all the performers proved equally uproarious.

Buoyed by their first adventure, Lippmann and Frau organised the second American Folk Blues Festival the following October with an equally impressive line-up (the stars including Muddy Waters and Sonny Boy Williamson). For the musicians, the adulation was remarkable, contrasting sharply with the lack of recognition they received in the US.

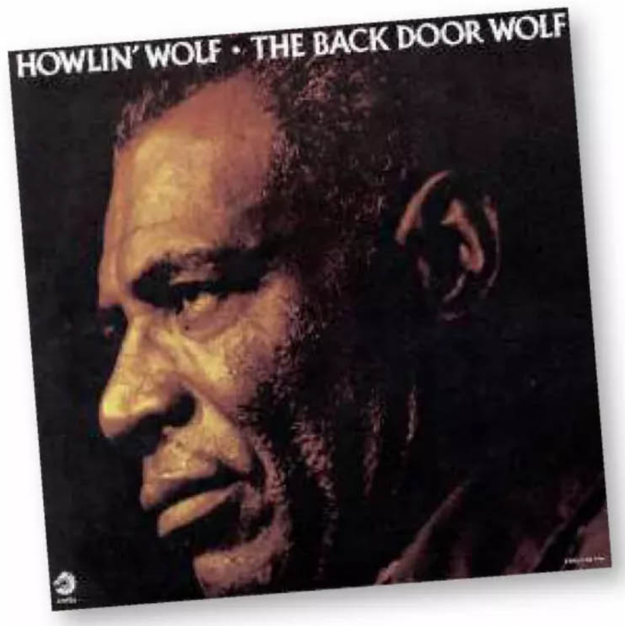
Despite being a dominant force on the Chicago scene, it took until the 1964 tour for Howlin' Wolf to finally make it on to the festival's bill. And when his version of Smokestack Lightnin' was reissued by Pye Records in May '64 and hit the UK Top 50 a month later (see main feature), he became the obvious headliner above Texan guitarist Lightnin' Hopkins and the returning Sonny Boy Williamson. With a band that included Willie Dixon on bass, Hubert Sumlin on guitar, Sunnyland Slim on piano and Clifton James on drums, Wolf's on-stage power and charisma saw him entrance audiences, the UK leg taking in five shows starting at Croydon's Fairfield Hall on October 19.

A few weeks after the tour, on November 13, 1964, The Rolling Stones released their version of Little Red Rooster, the track penned by Willie Dixon and recorded by Wolf three years earlier. The Stones' version would hit the top of the UK charts – a consecration of sorts for Chicago blues.



Big bad Wolf: on-stage during his first UK visit, September 1964.

Stones broke it by getting Wolf on that show. That was something we would never even have thought of, the hairs were just standing on my head. We talked about it later, and he said about how the man next door don't know who I am and here's some British kids from thousands of miles away. We laughed about it, and I know he was proud of what happened. As far as the record companies or the news media or anything, we were all ignored until those English kids came in."



It's a sad irony that Wolf's adoption by a white audience would become a major factor in the irrevocable decline of his recorded output. First of all, Paul Butterfield poached Wolf's rhythm section, Sam Lay and Jerome Arnold, winning himself brownie points for fronting a racially integrated band but also earning Wolf's undying resentment for breaking up one of his finest line-ups. Then Marshall Chess, aiming to cash in on West Coast psychedelic blues, oversaw an ill-judged attempt to update Wolf's sound.

"He didn't feel it was strange playing with these English kids – he enjoyed teaching them the blues." Eddie Shaw

"We get down there to the studio," said Sumlin, "and these guys had wah-wahs and everything else. Wolf didn't like it, so he went home and got into bed for three days, until these dudes got through with the psychedelic stuff. Three days they tried to get Wolf back down. Finally they got him to put his voice on – he said, 'I'll sing the number, just cut the music off, I don't want to hear that goddamn wah-wah.' That man was dedicated to his stuff, but they wouldn't take no notice of him." 1969's *The Howlin' Wolf Album* was destined to be forever known by Wolf's more succinct title. He called it 'The Birdshit Album' (aka 'The Dogshit Album'). 1970's *The London Sessions* was a slightly more successful attempt to update the Wolf formula, an experience that was rewarding on a personal, if not a musical level. "He genuinely enjoyed all that," says Eddie Shaw, who played sax in Wolf's band and later became his personal manager. "He didn't feel it was strange playing with these English kids, 'cos he was a nice person, and enjoyed trying to teach them what the blues was all about. About '74, when the Stones came to town, Wolf had Bill Wyman as a guest at his home. They spent a lot of time together, and that was because Wolf really liked them. He was just glad he could help put them on the right track."

By now in his sixties, Wolf believed he had to pass on his music, as Patton had passed it on to him, and continued to attempt to push Hubert Sumlin into a frontman role, with little success. "He was getting old, and he was about as happy as you could be," says Buddy Guy. "He'd joke, say, 'I know I'm getting on and I can't get around like I used to do, but you boys had better look out, 'cos the old man gonna drag his tail tonight.' I don't think he was an angry man, he accepted life – when you're religious you accept what life has given you, whether it's bad or good, and he saw some things I don't think he ever thought he would see, like going to Europe and a lot of other places he never dreamed of."

EDDIE SHAW REMEMBERS Wolf's final years: "The old man would never give up. He knew what was going on, but he wasn't giving up. I used to run my own club, the New 1815 on the West Side, and one night about 1973 I get this phone call. It's Wolf and he's saying, 'I think you need help at your club.' I said, What do you mean, I don't need no help. So he goes, 'I tell you what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna come over to your club every weekend and play.' I go, Are you asking me or telling me? And he says, 'I'm telling you.' So that's where he played every weekend.

"Sometimes we'd go out and play in the week, whatever cities we could go to where they had the dialysis machine – his kidneys were starting to give out after he had an auto accident. But the man was still taking music lessons, we'd still meet twice a week and talk about what was happening in the music business and everything else. He wasn't just gonna sit and sing these old blues songs about the '30s. That's why we were working on new material, 'cos the old man was up with what was happening in the world."

Wolf's last album, *Back Door Wolf*, was a fitting reflection of the grand old man's dotage. Although the arrangements and some of the songs were a far cry from Wolf's glory days, his voice was still magnificently untamed, as he howled his defiance in songs such as Coon On The Moon, where he presciently described a future America: "You know they call us coons, say we don't know no sense/You gonna wake up one morning, and a coon'll be President." Defying his failing kidneys, his failing legs, and a changing world, the Wolf roared every weekend at Shaw's club until just a few weeks before his kidneys finally gave out, in January 1976. As predictable as it was, for all of his band Wolf's passing was a profound shock. They simply couldn't imagine a world without him.

"I should have known," said Sumlin. "Things don't last always. But I never thought Wolf would have been dead. I don't know why, I just figured I would have gone first. But things went the other way. I guess we all must be here for something. In my time I found out that this is true music. This music tells a story, about the people that lived this life and is still living it. So I'm telling you, it ain't sad, 'cos this music will always be here."

Daddy cool: Wolf's band with Hubert Sumlin (second left): "He was just like a little baby if anybody knowed him."

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Happy days: In July 1968, behind the Fillmore in San Francisco.

Getty

LIFE'S A R.I.O.T.

In December 1968, revolutionary Detroit rock'n'rollers the MC5 arrived in New York for two shows at the Fillmore East. Little did they know they were entering a warzone and heading for a violent showdown with local dope gang the Up Against The Wall Motherfuckers. By Ben Edmonds.

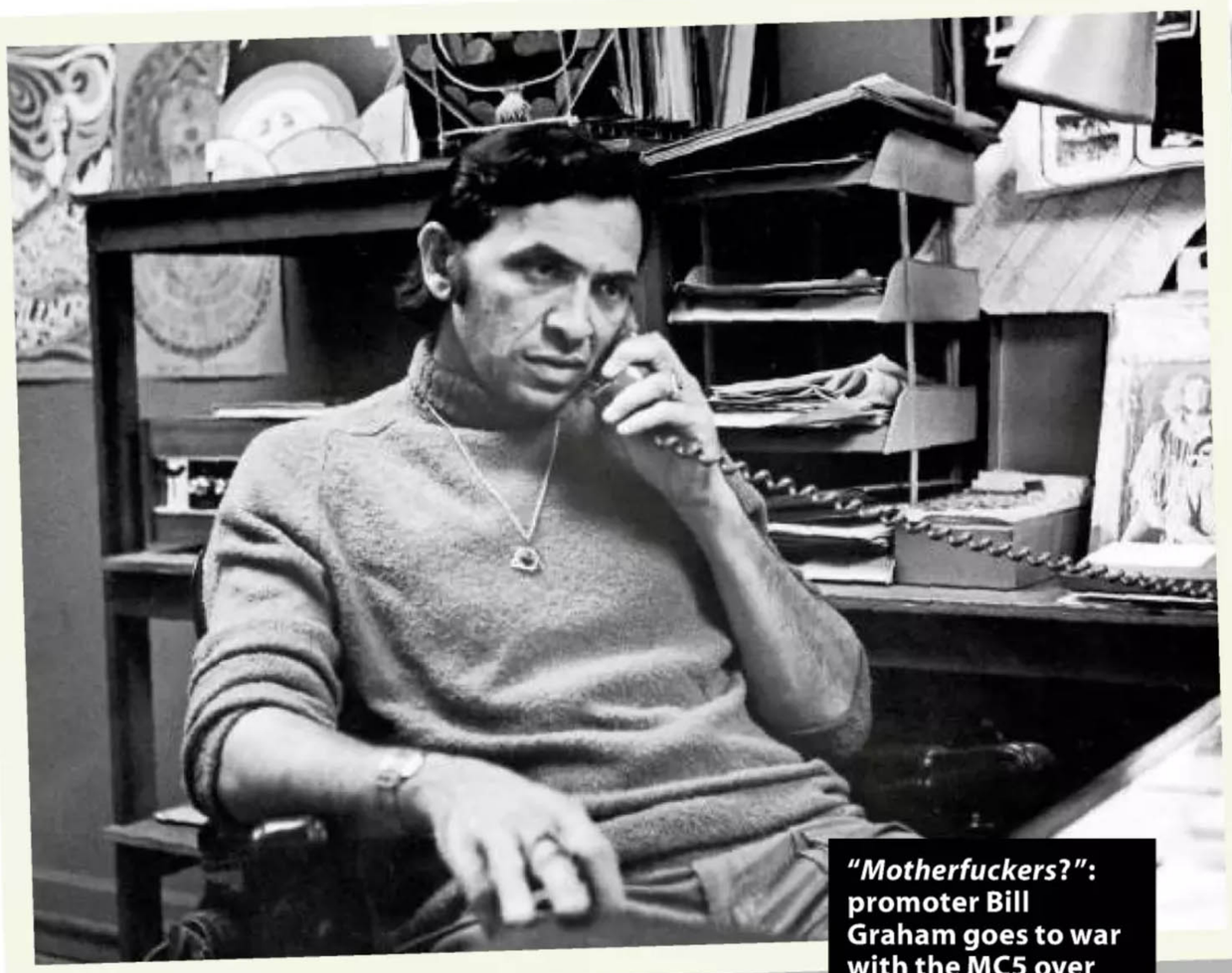
AS THEIR FLIGHT FROM Detroit touched down in New York on Thursday, December 26, 1968, the MC5 figured they had the future by the balls. Singer Rob Tyner's wild tangle of teased hair on the cover of the current Rolling Stone greeted them from every newsstand in the city. The nude photos of John Lennon and Yoko Ono three issues previously had gotten the young San Francisco paper censored and sensationalised around the world, heightening its visibility dramatically. Although this issue featured the Rolling Stones' new album, Janis Joplin's new band, and the sudden, spectacular partnership of Eric Clapton and Stevie Winwood in the new "supergroup" Blind Faith, its cover – and a fawning five-page feature – was devoted to the MC5, an unknown band whose debut album wouldn't be released for another six weeks. This was unprecedented.

Rolling Stone wasn't alone. Two weeks earlier, the Sunday New York Times had opined, "As the mode of the music changes, a new group from Detroit known as the MC5 is shaking the walls of the Motor City with the kind of poeticised intensity The Rolling Stones displayed in their early days… They could restore to rock its lost mantle of disrespectability."

The Village Voice had seconded that benediction. Time and Newsweek had both called asking what all the fuss was about.

According to the plan, they would all find out on the day after Christmas. Elektra Records president Jac Holzman had decided to introduce his new sensation to New York in a similarly unprecedented fashion: with a free concert at the Fillmore East. He rented the theatre and arranged to have tickets given away by hip FM radio station WNEW. Headlining the Fillmore East was a pinnacle of rock band accomplishment; this was where the MC5 would begin.

So the members of the Motor City 5 – singer Rob Tyner, guitarists Wayne Kramer and Fred 'Sonic' Smith, bassist Michael Davis and drummer Dennis Thompson – could perhaps be forgiven for thinking that they'd been handed the keys to the kingdom. What they didn't know was that the kingdom they'd inherited was hell.



"Motherfuckers?": promoter Bill Graham goes to war with the MC5 over their NYC debut.

"Motherfuckers?" Bill Graham screamed into the telephone. It was not unusual to hear the term pass the promoter's lips at a generous volume, except that it was usually trailed by exclamation marks rather than a question mark.

Loud verbals, aggressive posturing and bullyboy intimidation all had a prominent place in the Graham style. But if you did business with Bill you learned to live with this side of him. Because when it came to promoting rock concerts, he was quite simply the best in the business. And, it should be added, the best in a *bad* business, which is why you could actually come to treasure his aggressiveness, employed as it so often was in the service of a professionalism his competitors couldn't match.

Others may have been hipper, but the closer you scrutinised the way they did business, the better Bill Graham looked. You might not always like him personally, but you couldn't fault him professionally. At least in San Francisco.

New York was proving to be a different story. His Fillmore East, an only slightly refurbished Village Theatre on 2nd Avenue at 6th Street, had been in operation for a matter of months, but trouble had been brewing the entire time. New York was more fiercely territorial than San Francisco, and the territory surrounding the Fillmore East was claimed by the Up Against The Wall Motherfuckers, known more informally as the Motherfuckers. They were a loose aggregation of street crazies who, by dint of their overheated rhetoric and propensity for violence, had appropriated the role of spokesmen for the Lower East Side "community". Aggression and confrontation were traits the Motherfuckers shared with Bill Graham, so it had threatened to be an explosive mix from day one.

The first skirmish had come in October, when the Motherfuckers took over the stage during a Living Theatre benefit performance of Paradise Now, ranting about capitalist oppression and calling for the Fillmore East to be "liberated" in the name of "the people". Graham appeared from the wings and ranted right back. "Nobody wanted to liberate this place a year ago when it was a rat-infested dump," he spat. "Why don't you go liberate the bakery across the street or the store next door?"

At a town meeting the following week, the Motherfuckers told the promoter, "Fuck your goddam town meetings. We don't need to talk. This is a fuck-in, man. We're here to have a good time. This is our crash pad for the winter."

Cooler heads eventually prevailed, and Graham was persuaded to let "the community" try a series of Wednesday night free shows. But after three chaotic weeks of steadily mounting property damage, and threats from the police to revoke the hall's licence because of rampant drug dealing, Graham pulled the plug on the experiment. The Motherfuckers vowed bloody reprisal, and targeted the MC5's free show as the night to exact their revenge.

THE MC5 WERE NO STRANGERS TO trouble. Back home in Detroit the Five were not so much famous as infamous, the baddest boys in a town full of badass rock'n'roll bands. Raised in a place where the play was as hard as the work, the Five had made their reputation as the house band at the Grande Ballroom who blew the national and international headliners off the stage so regularly that these groups began to stipulate that the MC5 not open for them. The Five had their own ➤

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Revolutionaries: the MC5 (from left) Dennis Thompson, Rob Tyner, Wayne Kramer, Fred 'Sonic' Smith, Michael Davis.

Kicking out the jams: live at the Grande Ballroom, Detroit, October 30, 1968.

"WE GOT HASSLED CONSTANTLY. CLUB OWNERS PULLED THE PLUG ON US." JOHN SINCLAIR

➤ battle cry for this kind of musical gunslinging: *Kick out the jams!*

"The full meaning of kick out the jams," explained Cub Koda, then leader of the band Brownsville Station, "was, 'Hey, kick out the jams, motherfucker, or we'll get somebody up there who will.' We'd learned from R&B acts that the stage was a sacred place, and the right to be there was earned, not assumed. Detroit audiences understood this and expected nothing less. I remember seeing a group out at Wamplers Lake Pavilion called The Kandy-Matics who were so lame that the audience jumped onstage en masse and physically removed them from the bandstand."

The MC5 were a performing unit of awesome and awe-inspiring power. They'd explode from the dressing room, hit the stage running and wouldn't let up for the entire set. Their early incarnation as a greasy Chuck Berry/James Brown cover machine was giving way to a concept singer Rob Tyner called "avant-rock", which reflected their roots in hard Yardbirds rave-ups but was also informed by their increasing fascination with the celestial jazz territory mapped out by John Coltrane, Pharaoh Sanders and Sun Ra. In Wayne Kramer and Fred 'Sonic' Smith, musical partners since childhood, the MC5 possessed one of rock's great guitar tandems. The band's Achilles heel was that the ear-shattering volumes they inflicted on their audiences often buried their considerable musical attributes under waves of white noise.

Dan Carlisle, a disc jockey at Detroit's original underground radio outlet WABX-FM, witnessed many scenes of MC5 carnage, but one stands out in his mind. "Three Dog Night were in town to

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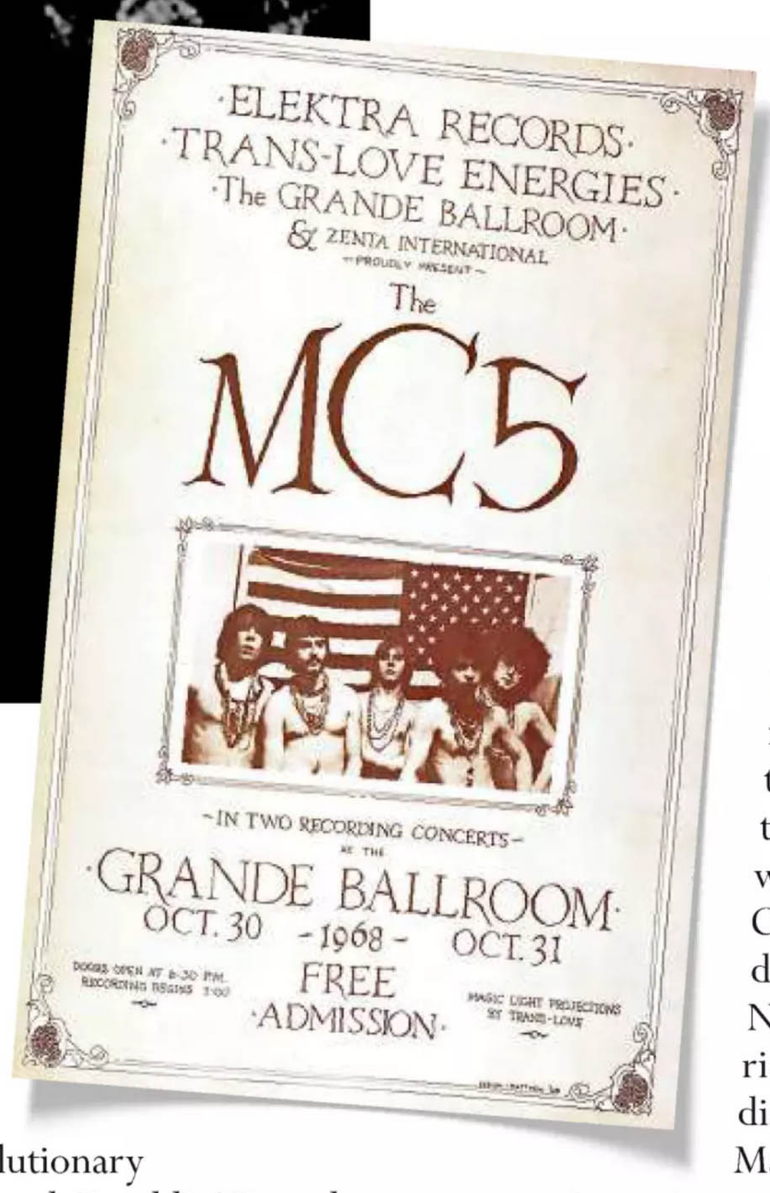
play the Grande Ballroom," he recalls. "During an interview they asked who else was on the bill. I said, Well, it's gonna be tough for you tonight, guys, it's the MC5. When they professed ignorance, I suggested we all go down to the gig a little early. I sat with them at the back of the Grande and watched as the Five's MC, Jesse Crawford, came out and gave his revolutionary harangue to bring the band on. Halfway through Ramblin' Rose the eyes of the California boys were bugging out and their ears were ringing. When Rob Tyner leaped from behind an amplifier and screamed, 'Kick out the jams motherfucker!', they blanched.

"The MC5 really stormed through their set that night. Toward the end, Jesse came back out and whipped up the crowd some more, telling them that no woman, no matter how fat or ugly, would be denied sexual pleasure in the MC5's dressing room after the show. Total craziness. The Five played their closing piece [Black To Comm] and trashed the equipment. They completely used that audience up. Then Three Dog Night had to come out with their little harmonies."



In 1968 the Motor City was on fire with rock'n'roll. Bob Seger had already racked up a string of local hits; Ted Nugent's Amboy Dukes had broken through nationally with Journey To The Center Of The Mind; SRC's first album was being played by John Peel; Iggy Pop's Psychedelic Stooges were getting more "killer" and "o-mind" with each passing day; and The Rationals were making some of the best rock'n'soul records since, well, Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels. This was a hard, driven brand of noise with no trace of the folk influence that tempered the new rock then being made on both coasts. This would prove to be a problem when Detroit attempted to export its raucous music to more genteel environments, but at home they couldn't get enough of it.

Though the MC5 only had a couple of unplayed singles under their belts, they were the reigning local rock'n'roll band, and the most visible proponents of the city's emerging counterculture. In provincial Detroit, this made them the object of constant police scrutiny, centring on their habitual use of the forbidden "motherfucker" word to introduce Kick Out The Jams. Their manager, poet and activist John Sinclair, had been a favourite police target for years, doing prison time for marijuana possession. When the local media dubbed Sinclair "king of the hippies", the police surveillance intensified. The MC5's "total assault on the culture" and Sinclair's programme of "rock'n'roll, dope and fucking in the streets" seemed to be the establishment's worst nightmare made flesh.

John Sinclair: "We got hassled constantly. We'd show up at a job and the authorities would already be waiting, looking for any excuse to fuck with us. The promoters would be trying to tell us what we could and couldn't do. In Benton Harbor they had it written into the contract that the band were not to move on stage, fearing that our salacious undulations would corrupt the young girls in the audience! Club owners regularly pulled the plug on us, saying we were too loud. They'd threaten not to pay us if we said 'motherfucker'; Tyner usually got around that by having the crowd scream it out, which we couldn't be held accountable for. Or the club owner would beat us out of our money, and call in the cops to beat us up if we complained. These were the frustrations being felt by forward-thinking young people all over – with the government, the Vietnam war, the lack of self-determination – but magnified because we were in the public eye, and it started to piss the band off. I'd been pissed off since the '50s!"

POLICE HARASSMENT BECAME so unrelenting that the band and Sinclair's Trans-Love Energies commune was effectively driven out of Detroit, taking refuge in the slightly more tolerant college town of Ann Arbor 30 miles west. The MC5 were further radicalised when they went to Chicago in August '68 to perform at the demonstrations coinciding with the Democratic National Convention, which turned into a police riot played out in front of an outraged and disgusted television audience worldwide. Norman Mailer, covering the Convention for Harper's magazine, witnessed the Five's unsanctioned hit-and-split set in Lincoln Park. "Had the horns of the Huns ever had noise to compare?" the esteemed novelist wondered, likening the band's sound to an "electric crescendo screaming as if at the electro-mechanical climax of the age."

Shortly after the MC5 signed with Elektra Records and recorded their debut album live at the Grande Ballroom – an audacious move for a new band – the White Panther Party appeared. At first they were simply the humorous product of too many tokes around the Trans-Love dinner table, but there was also an element, according to Rob Tyner, who died after a heart attack in 1991, "of John wanting to create the illusion of something bigger and badder ➢

◄ behind him: that if you fucked with us, you were fucking with a whole organisation that might just fuck with you right back."

This overt politicisation would ultimately create more problems than it solved for all concerned, but in the beginning it seemed not only a proper response to the increasingly hostile environment in which they found themselves, but also a nifty means of distinguishing the Five from your run-of-the-mill rockstars. Thus the hippie-hopeful Trans-Love Energies gave way to the more militant White Panther Party, and the MC5 became the rock and revolution band.

So this group was like a lightning rod for trouble. The only thing unusual about the New York City briar patch the MC5 were about to be thrown into was that the trouble was not of their own making.

AS A TUNE-UP FOR THEIR FILLMORE EAST coronation, the Five booked their first major out-of-town engagement. On the weekend of December 12-14, 1968 they would open for the Velvet Underground at the Boston Tea Party, that taste-making East Coast city's version of the Grande Ballroom. This is where the MC5 would make their first acquaintance with the Up Against The Wall Motherfuckers.

The band appeared to make a goodly number of converts on Friday and Saturday, but even on their best nights the MC5 were a polarising agent. "You must choose, brothers and sisters," MC Jesse Crawford would rail, and a certain percentage of every audience would choose to be repulsed by their brutal sonic assault, or offended by a stage show that regularly featured mock-copulation with an audience member during their version of The Troggs' I Want You Right Now.

To anyone willing to brave the decibel overkill, the Five could be exhilarating. Richard Dewhurst would go on to become an Emmy-winning screenwriter, but he was just another teenage music addict in the Tea Party audience. "That might still be the best rock'n'roll show I've ever seen," he testifies. "Even before they hit the stage you knew you were in for something. They had double-stacks of Marshalls that towered behind them, hung with skull and crossbones and American flags. The hum from their amps on the darkened stage was louder than most other bands played. At one point Wayne Kramer climbed atop the amps and played his solo straddling these two double-stacked Marshalls, slowly rocking them back and forth. He did a dive-bomb off 'em just as they were about to collapse on each other, landing on the stage and doing a split, while playing the whole time! They were amazing. It was mysterious, dangerous, thrilling – everything you wanted a band to be. My ears rang for two days afterward, but I didn't care."

Wayne Kramer: "Oh yes, I remember that show. I leapt off my amp into a knee-drop, only to discover that the stage was made of concrete. That was around the time I considered maybe leaving the knee-drops to James Brown. My knees were so swollen I could barely get my pants off. We worked real hard that night – I've probably got the bone chips to prove it. We won that one."

Backstage before the Sunday evening show, Sinclair was approached by a member of the Motherfuckers, who asked if he might have a minute or two of the band's stage time to appeal for funds to aid in the defence of another Motherfucker who was in jail for stabbing a sailor. The Five, who were known back in Michigan for their readiness to play benefits for any worthy cause, had no problem with this.

At the end of the set, representatives of the Motherfuckers took the stage and made their plea. While a hat was being passed, one member launched into an incoherent diatribe about hair power: "All that hair just builds up inside and *breaks out*, and that's what *we* gotta do!" The would-be firebrand then proclaimed that the building wasn't large enough to contain the revolutionary energies of the assembled multitudes, and called for them to tear down the walls of the Tea Party and take the battle into the streets.

At this, his microphone went dead, and the house compere materialised to hustle the hotheads off the stage. When the Velvets came on, Lou Reed was incensed. "I'd just like to make one thing clear," he told the crowd. "We have nothing to do with what went on earlier and in fact we consider it very stupid. This is our favourite place to play in the whole country and we would hate to see anyone even try to destroy it." Tea Party proprietor Don Law was even angrier. He believed the MC5 were responsible for advocating the destruction of his club. Law, an industry figure of considerable influence, got right on the phone.

"I LEAPT OFF MY AMP INTO A KNEE-DROP – THE STAGE WAS MADE OF CONCRETE." **WAYNE KRAMER**

The Five arrived in New York on Monday afternoon, having little idea of the mayhem they'd helped to unleash in Boston. As far as they were concerned, it had been just one more night of craziness. That night was relatively trouble free, spent down at Steve Paul's Scene club where The Rationals were opening for Slim Harpo (with Lightnin' Slim on guitar!). The next day, the band and their henchmen – manager Sinclair, MC Crawford, and assorted roadies and pals – trooped up to the Elektra Records office to check on the progress of their impending album. These big, hulking, loud Midwestern boys in black leather swaggered in like they owned the place, rolling cigar-sized joints. Soon the corridors of power were hazy with hemp smoke, while copies of a single that had been specially pressed to be given away at the concert – Kick Out The Jams, with their version of John Lee Hooker's Motor City's Burning on the flip – were being blasted at a volume not conducive to button-down business.

Not everyone at Elektra was charmed by the label's latest acquisition. According to Danny Fields, the Elektra "company freak" who'd convinced label head Jac Holzman to sign the band (along with the Psychedelic Stooges), corporate forces were already aligning against the MC5. "Jac liked the idea of people with divergent musical tastes

American heroes: MC Jesse Crawford leads the charge, Detroit, '68.

working for him," Fields says, "but there were power centres at Elektra that loathed this from day one. Hated it. Elektra had been the well-mannered label of Judy Collins and Theodore Bikel. It was bad enough when they started signing Sunset Strip thugs like Love, but with The Doors at Number 1 they couldn't complain. It was enough to have this monster called Jim Morrison, but then I come along with this band of five monsters, and a monster manager, and a monster political agenda as well. The more conservative element in the company wanted us gone, all of us."

They would have to wait. That same day, the Rolling Stone cover story hit the newsstands and this band from Detroit that almost nobody had actually heard was the talk of the town. Later that night the White Panthers met up with the home office of the Motherfuckers. After hearing their blow-by-blow account of their contretemps with "capitalist pig" Bill Graham, for some inexplicable reason Sinclair agreed to have the Five play the next night at the community's Wednesday free Fillmore freakout. Only a week away from their own coming-out party at the Fillmore East, and the MC5 were risking blunting the impact of the most important show of their lives by playing the same venue for the Motherfuckers? What possessed them? The Five were suckers for a righteous political come-on, but they had only a reefer-sweetened notion of what they were really walking into.

The scene that greeted the band at the Fillmore the following evening was nothing like the high-energy rock'n'roll celebrations they were used to back home. The Wednesday free nights had degenerated into little more than a warm place for street people to conduct their business. Drugs were being dealt, people were being shaken down for money, and gang rivalries were being played out in the aisles. The mood was already tense, and the Five's habitual lateness didn't help. When they finally arrived, the stage was littered with agitated street people, some mumbling ominously about "rockstars keeping us waiting".

When roadie Ron Levine hip-checked one of them off the stage as the band was coming on, knives were pulled. "There's a kind of crowd control," explains Wayne Kramer, "where you sort of 'unintentionally' throw a shoulder into someone, or swing your guitar around to create space. Eventually we took the stage back." The Five's set passed without further incident, and they were happy to head back to Detroit, which Sinclair described as "heaven itself" after the oppressive atmosphere of New York.

DECEMBER 26, 1968. WHEN THE BAND RETURNED to the Big Apple a week later, they were unaware that the situation between Graham and the Motherfuckers had soured even further. The night they'd played turned out to be the last free Wednesday before Bill Graham cancelled the series. Threatened by the police with closure, he pleaded with the community in an open letter to "accept our predicament (which is now your reality) with intelligence, understanding, and grace." The Motherfuckers answered with an open letter of their own. "The pigs threaten to close Graham down unless he stops our free ➢

Getty

Star-spangled: the MC5 at Mount Clemens Pop Festival, Michigan, August 1969.

➤ night," it read in part. "He doesn't have to worry about the pigs. We'll close him down… Thursday night they scheduled a 'free' concert for Elektra Records. We'll be there."

John Sinclair found several frantic messages from Elektra awaiting him at the hotel. The previous week he'd committed 500 tickets for their show to the Motherfuckers for distribution to the Lower East Side community. But in light of what had happened since, Graham though it more prudent to lock these tickets in his desk drawer and claim they were lost. A Motherfucker spokesman called Elektra vice-president William Harvey and told him that unless they were admitted they'd burn the Fillmore East to the ground. In a move sure to earn the eternal enmity of Bill Graham, Sinclair sided with the militants. If his promise wasn't honoured, he said, the MC5 wouldn't play.

Issuing an ultimatum to their record company and the most powerful promoter in the business was ballsy beyond belief for a band whose record wasn't even out yet, but an hour later the missing tickets mysteriously reappeared. This apparently wasn't enough for the Motherfuckers. "They thought the MC5 was just gonna be a front for them," explained Bob 'Righteous' Rudnick, the East Village Other columnist who'd brought the two groups together. "Every time the MC5 accommodated them, they'd make more outrageous demands. They expected that the band would turn the stage over to them at the Elektra show so they could continue their war with Graham. When the Five said no, that this was their night, the Motherfuckers got pissed off at them too."

Jesse Crawford underscored this when he brought the Five on that night with an introduction that was noticeably short on White Panther histrionics. But the band's attempts to diffuse this situation were already too late. Even before they hit the stage, violence had erupted in the lobby, as Graham and his security staff battled a swarm of Motherfuckers and members of the Pagans motorcycle gang inside who were attempting to force the doors open so their brethren outside could "liberate" the Fillmore.

In the fracas Graham was chain-whipped across the face, breaking his nose. He initially identified his attacker as Rob Tyner, though the singer was backstage at the time, and would never have participated in any event. (When I spoke with him 15 years later, Bill Graham still clung to the irrational belief that the MC5 were somehow responsible for the assault.)

On-stage the MC5 ploughed through their set, doing their best to steamroll the catcalls from the militants who were impatient with all this music and wanted to hear some revolutionary rhetoric. "We were doing OK, but I must admit that I aggravated the situation," said Tyner. "We had heard nothing but politics, politics, politics, for weeks, so I said, Look, we're here to play Detroit rock'n'roll, we didn't come here for no bullshit politics. It was true, but it was like poking these crazies with a sharp stick. Then it got even more intense. It turned into something out of that movie Escape From New York, really scary."

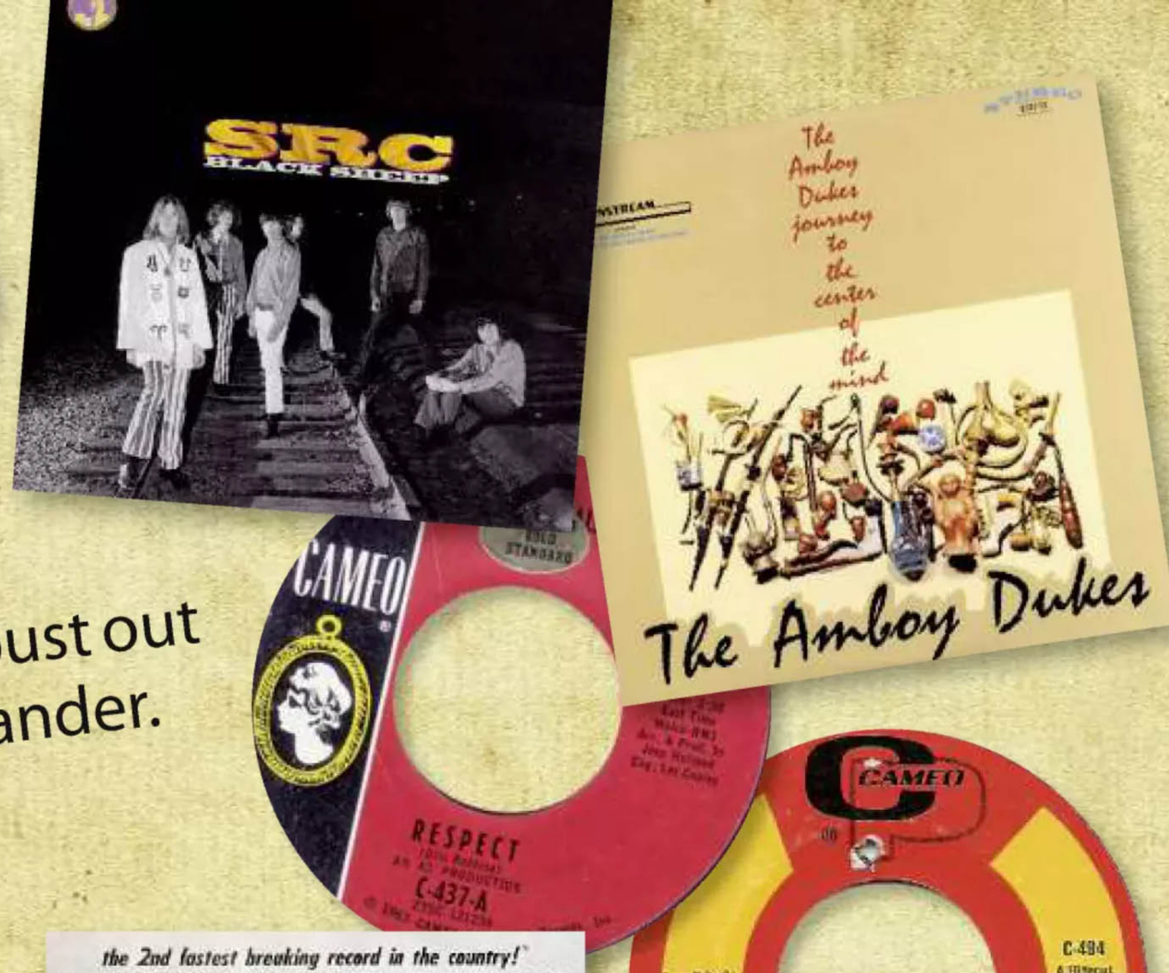
"IT TURNED INTO ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK. IT GOT REALLY SCARY." ROB TYNER

Seeing the MC5 for the first time that night was Lenny Kaye. The future music writer and Patti Smith Group guitarist had read about the band in Bob Rudnick and Dennis Frawley's Kokaine Karma columns in EVO. "Their extravagant prose led me to expect a lot," Lenny remembers, "but the band didn't let me down. They were startlingly good. They were also being hollered at by certain audience members almost from the beginning. There weren't that ➤

Getty

MOTOR CITY'S BURNING

Five tracks by five more acts that tried to bust out of the Detroit rock scene. By Phil Alexander.



The Rationals
Respect
(A2 Records 7-inch, 1967)

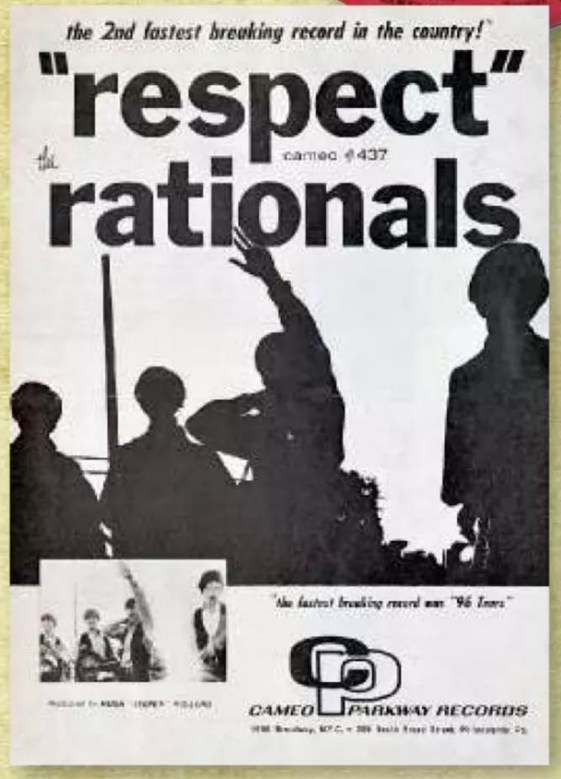
Of all the acts to emerge from Detroit in the mid-'60s, The Rationals seemed the most likely to succeed. Managed by Detroit prime mover 'Jeep' Holland – promoter, owner of A2 (pronounced: A-Squared) Records and the man who bestowed James Osterberg with his 'Iggy' soubriquet – the Ann Arbor outfit also boasted one of the most powerful singers around in Scott Morgan. It was Holland who suggested the four-piece record this Otis Redding tune, which they duly did a full year prior to Aretha Franklin's version. Originally intended as the B-side to Holland-Dozier-Holland's Leaving Here, the track garnered local radio play, leading to a re-think of which track to lead with. Despite being both powerful and tastefully arranged, somehow Respect failed to find a wider audience but confirmed the band's status as hometown heroes when they were voted the Most Popular Group Of The Year by local radio station WKNR in December '66.

Bob Seger & The Last Heard
Heavy Music Parts 1 & 2
(Cameo-Parkway 7-inch, 1967)

Inspired by Little Richard, Elvis Presley and then James Brown, Michigan-born Bob Seger began fronting his own band in '61 at the age of 16. Armed with an impressive local reputation, he cut this classic 45 six years later. A joyous ode to the thrill of listening to records on the radio, Heavy Music boasts lustful lyrics and a driving beat built on its finger snaps, bass and piano intro. Seger's soulful vocals throughout are remarkable, the man himself laying down the gauntlet to any potential rivals on Part 2 of the tune where he ad libs the line: "SRC and Stevie Winwood ain't got nothing on me!" Indeed, the only thing that stopped Heavy Music becoming a nationwide US hit was the fact that the Cameo-Parkway label folded not long after the single's release.

The Frost
Sunshine
(Date 7-inch, 1967)

When the 19-year-old Dick Wagner met Roy Orbison by chance after a show in 1961 the Big O played him his new, as yet unreleased, single: Crying backed with Candy Man. It was this experience that set Wagner – already something of a local Michigan guitar hero – on the path to writing songs. By '67, his band The Bossmen were en route to becoming The Frost when they released this fiery, soul-influenced tune. At its core lies Wagner's ear for a good tune and his stinging, dexterous guitar style – the track emerging as a precursor to a sound later refined by Deep Purple. Wagner would of course go on to enjoy a hugely distinguished career that would see him play with everyone from Lou Reed to Alice Cooper to Ringo Starr. The Frost, however, would retain their mythical status in Detroit until his death in 2014.



SRC
Black Sheep
(Capitol 7-inch, 1968)

Formed from the ashes of The Fugitives and The Chosen Few (who famously opened for The MC5 at The Grande Ballroom), Scott Richard Case were another band initially signed and managed by 'Jeep' Holland. Their early sets consisted of Stones tunes and the odd Motown classic (including The Supremes' When That Love Light Shines), but it was heavier outfits such as The Pretty Things, The Who and Cream that influenced their increasingly ambitious sound. Signing to Capitol Records (who would issue their three studio albums), they released this organ-driven, baroque number punctuated by moments of guitar freakery courtesy of Gary Quackenbush. The track's complex lyrical nihilism – "Black sheep, outcast, misfit, Ishmael!" – underlines that the SCR were indeed in search of something deeper and altogether heavier.

The Amboy Dukes
Journey To The Center Of The Mind
(Mainstream 7-inch, 1968)

It is hard to imagine Tarzan-like redneck Ted Nugent indulging in any kind of lysergic activity. In fact, since the release of this 1968 tune – the title track to The Amboy Dukes' second album of the same year – he has repeatedly denied any knowledge of the track's drug-influenced wordplay, explaining that he viewed it as a tune about self-belief and identity. Acting as the band's driver, tour manager, accountant, principal composer and "babysitter", the hippie-hating Nugent would turn down the chance for The Dukes to appear at Woodstock, before subsequently launching his solo career as a hard rock guitar hero. Nevertheless, Journey To The Centre Of The Mind remains an era-defining psych smash; its driving quality down to Nugent's tough rifferama and fellow guitarist Steve Farmer's out-there lyricism.

Tough rifferama: The Amboy Dukes with guitarist Ted Nugent (far left), 1968.

Getty

≺ many of them, but there doesn't need to be to cause a disruption, which was obviously the intention. The further the MC5 got into their set, the rougher it got around them. Things were being thrown. When they finished, the street people swarmed onto the stage. Finding the microphones turned off, they attacked the equipment. The picture from that night that stays with me most vividly is of some deranged guy taking a chain and whipping it repeatedly over the drummer's cymbals."

Rob Tyner: "I then saw a knifeblade come through the stage curtain – slash! slash! – and this head pokes through, leering like a madman. Our gear was flying all over the place. I figured it was a good time to split, but when I opened the backstage door it was even more insane out in the street."

Cuffed: Fred 'Sonic' Smith and (right) John Sinclair, in custody after trouble in Oakland, July 1968.

THE MILITANTS WHO'D UNSUCCESSFULLY TRIED to force their way in were milling around outside making threatening noises, their numbers swelled by reinforcements from inside the theatre and assorted neighbourhood lowlife. As the band members made their way toward the cars Elektra had booked, the crowd showered the vehicles with rocks, debris, and the 45s that had been given away at the show.

majority might have seen, the band figured, was some unexplained scuffling in the vicinity of the stage. At the airport the group was then greeted by a rowdy gaggle of supporters. "Getting off the plane and finding this rally was really exciting," Wayne Kramer recalls. "There were probably only 40 or 50 fans, but to us it felt like thousands. My youthful fantasies were coming true. It was all working out."

When *Kick Out The Jams* was released a few weeks later, it seemed to second Kramer's assessment. The title track shot to Number 2 on Detroit's biggest Top 40 station CKLW, prevented from despoiling the top spot only by Tommy Roe's Dizzy. The album sold more copies in Michigan than any local band had ever dared dream.

But this was a false prosperity. The forces that had been unleashed in Boston and New York were already working behind the scenes to ensure a different outcome. On one side, Don Law and Bill Graham were blackballing the band, describing them to other promoters as "dangerous revolutionaries and not to be trusted". On the other side, the Motherfuckers were spreading the word that the band were phonies. The MC5 were in your classic no-win situation, screwed from both ends.

"I THEN SAW A KNIFEBLADE COME THROUGH THE STAGE CURTAIN..." ROB TYNER

Danny Fields: "The band were seen as traitors to community values because I hired these limos. But I always did, because it made sense for large numbers of people. I was so naive that I didn't see it as a flagrantly provocative political gesture. I suppose I should have hired armoured tanks."

Wayne Kramer: "These people were screaming and crying that we had sold them out, that we were pigs and capitalist tools. They were throwing trash and smashing our records on the limousine, which took off, leaving me and Jesse stranded there. I felt like I had to answer these people who were saying my band wasn't what I was saying it was. So we stood our ground and tried to explain our position to these Motherfuckers, because we felt we'd been righteous throughout, but a mob scene developed. I began to pick up menacing movement in the crowd, and saw a knife flash. So did a couple of Motherfucker leaders, who knew this was about to get way out of hand and personally hustled us back into the Fillmore. We talked for a while more, but I realised it was pointless."

John Sinclair: "It was galling. We gave these Motherfuckers access to our stage in Boston, we played their night for free, and we gave Graham an ultimatum that we wouldn't perform our show unless they were accommodated. We didn't even have a record out yet, and here we were laying our whole career on the line for these people. What more did they want, a blowjob?"

The MC5 flew back to Detroit thinking they'd dodged a bullet. Few members of the Fillmore audience had been fully aware of what transpired at the end of the show. The most the majority might have seen, the band figured, was some unexplained scuffling in the vicinity of the stage.

It also did not bode well for the Motor City scene they were proud to represent. WABX DJ Jerry Lubin was at the Fillmore, and remembers a performance that sometimes transcended the troubles, but also "the feeling that a substantial portion of this audience was going in a different direction, that what we demanded in Detroit was not necessarily going to be what the rest of the country wanted".

The contradictions that the night of December 26, 1968 eventually brought to light – between factions at Elektra, between pieces of a splintering rock audience, between music and politics, between Sinclair's vision and the band's, and finally between band members themselves – would conspire to do the MC5 in. With all that was set in motion on this one evening, you could almost make a case that the band's career effectively ended at the Fillmore East.

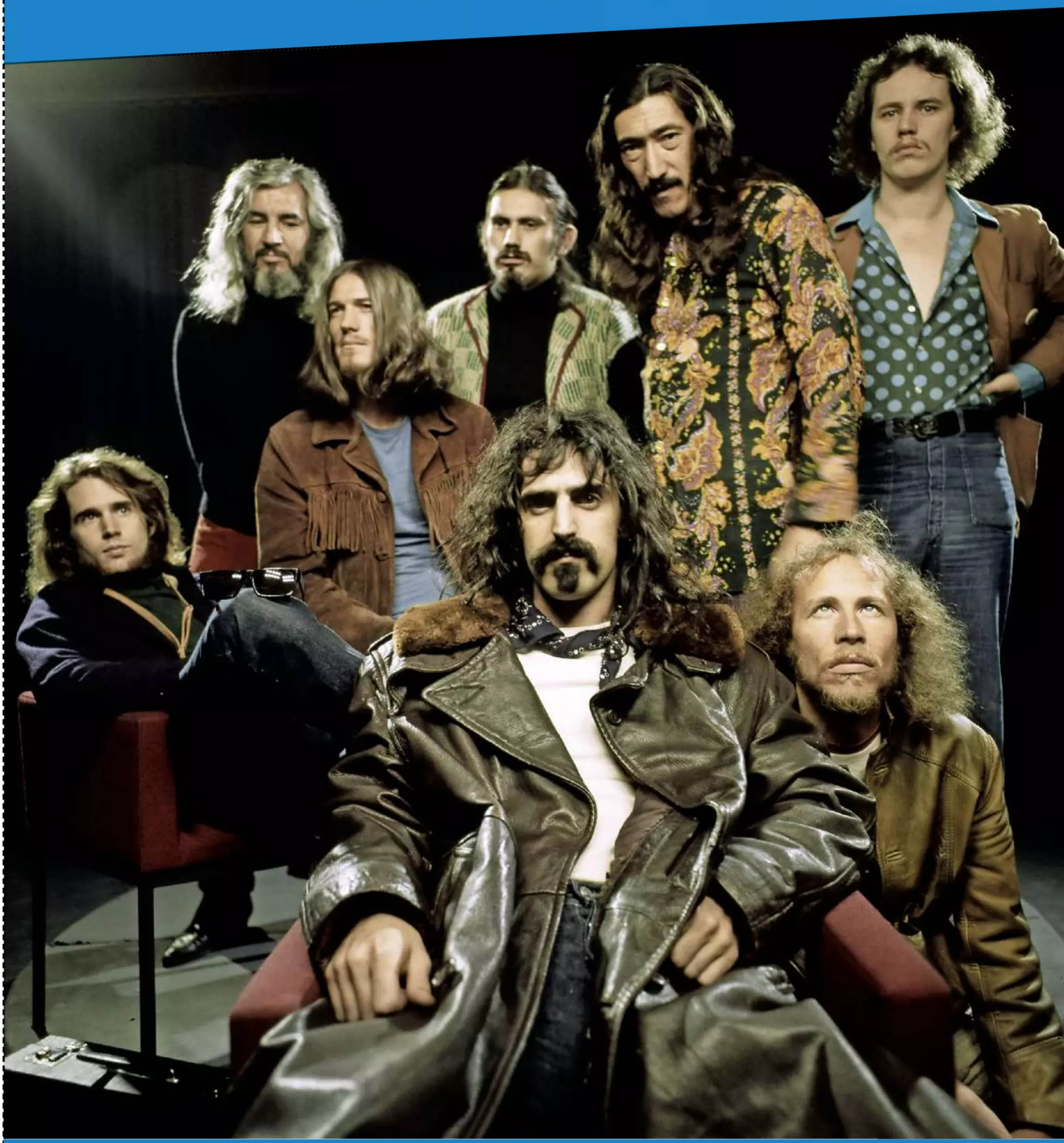
The Five didn't know they were doomed and soldiered on through three albums and God knows how many gigs in the next four years, without ever receiving so much as the scent of a royalty cheque. But to the karmic bank balance of rock'n'roll, the MC5 were monumental contributors. What these five men could do with a room full of like-minded people has seldom been equalled, and may never have been bettered. The mainstream still may not have erected any monuments in their honour, but the discerning ear can hear echoes of the MC5 haunting every energy-based form of rock'n'roll that has followed them.

Their redemption – and perhaps their revenge – is a world that in the 21st century needs their incendiary rock'n'roll more than ever. Ⓜ

Leni Sinclair

PIN-UPS

FREAKY PEOPLE BEING FREAKY!



Includes THE SEEDS | STEVIE WONDER | SUN RA
SANDIE SHAW | SLY STONE | DR JOHN
MARSHA HUNT | JONI MITCHELL | SOFT MACHINE
FRANK ZAPPA AND THE MOTHERS OF INVENTION

DR JOHN

MARSHA HUNT

SOFT MACHINE

JONI MITCHELL

SLY STONE

FRANK ZAPPA

THE SEEDS

STEVIE WONDER

SANDIE SHAW

Alamy (2), Getty (7), Rex (2)

The wiry schoolboy with the big quiff: Bowie in his first group The Kon-Rads, summer 1962.

THE ABSOLUTE BEGINNER

Born and raised in South London, from an early age David Bowie was the ultimate seeker, developing an obsession with all things American and exploring – and quickly discarding – every new fad, fashion and musical evolution as he edged ever closer to discovering his own voice and style. In this 20-page bonanza, Mark Blake charts his journey from birth to Mod (starting overleaf), while on page 90 Chris Welch contemplates the singer's profusion of creative adventures before finally topping the charts in summer 1969 with Space Oddity.

Alamy

JOHNNY MORAN'S WAS A FAMILIAR VOICE ON PIRATE RADIO IN THE early 1960s. In August '66, Moran arrived at London's Marquee club to interview another budding pop star for offshore Radio London. A recording of their encounter survives to this day. "And now a young British boy whose career will surely develop him into one of the bigger names in the showbiz field," he announced in a voice pitched somewhere between 'BBC newscaster' and 'hip uncle'. "He's a great attraction here at the Marquee... And his name is David Bowie."

Cue: applause and screams from the Marquee's highly vocal audience.

"David, you're working with a backing group, The Buzz," Moran continued. "Have you always been with them?"

"As David Bowie, yes I've always been with them, for about six months," replied the earnest sounding young singer.

"Why do you say *as* David Bowie?" asked Moran. To which Bowie replied flatly: "I was somebody else before that." Moran laughed uncertainly. But Bowie pushed on, explaining how he was now writing a musical "with my mentor Tony Hatch"; how it wouldn't detract from his pop career; how he didn't see himself as another Tommy Steele, how he wanted to move into cabaret...

For Johnny Moran, it was just another day at the office. He had Jonathan King's protégés Hedgehoppers Anonymous and West London's boy/girl singing sensation Episode Six lined up next. But heard again now, the then 19-year-old David Bowie sounds like a young man with a plan.

Bowie began his musical career as "somebody else", and would go through many transformations in the years ahead. But he'd been "somebody else" several times over by the time he met Moran. Even in the early '60s, Bowie was a shapeshifter: a blur of clothes, hairstyles, fads, ideas. "He'd go in and out of things quickly," said his first bandmate George Underwood. "But that was David."

The journey from David Jones to the 'David Bowie' of his 1967 debut album was one of highs, lows, hype, sleight of hand and a steely single-mindedness remembered by all who knew him.

David Robert Jones was born in Brixton, South London, on January 8, 1947. His father, Haywood, worked for Barnado's children charity; his mother, Peggy Burns, was a waitress. The family moved to suburban Bromley, Kent when Bowie was six. "I had a very reserved, respectable childhood," he said, years later. "Nothing really happened to me that one would consider freaky."

Only the existence of an older, illegitimate half-brother, Terry, dented this so-called 'respectable' image. Bowie apparently idolised Terry, whose schizophrenia later consigned him to life in an institution. There was talk of the 'Burns curse', referring to Peggy's family's history of mental illness, which had previously afflicted David's maternal aunts.

Bowie addressed the subject in a 1976 Playboy interview. "I'm quite fond of the insanity, actually," he said. "It's a nice thing to throw out at parties, don't you think? Everybody finds empathy in a nutty family. Everybody says, 'Oh, yes, my family is quite mad.' Mine really is. No fucking about, boy."

George Underwood and the future David Bowie first met in the 18th Bromley Cub Scout troop when they were nine years old. The pair found a common interest not in Baden-Powell's nine rules of scouting (number eight: "a scout smiles and whistles under all circumstances...") but in rock'n'roll and skiffle.

It was 1956, and Elvis had just arrived in the British charts with Heartbreak Hotel. But it was extravagantly coiffured, manically grinning Little Richard whom Bowie was most sold on. "If it hadn't have been for him, I probably wouldn't have gone into music," he said. "When I was nine and first saw Little Richard in a film that played around town – I think it was probably Girl Can't Help It – seeing those four saxophonists onstage, it was like, 'I want to be in that band!'"

In the meantime, though, there was also homegrown would-be bluesman Lonnie Donegan and skiffle; *anyone*, even English ration-book kids, could play

Bowie (far left) with The Kon-Rads. Singer Roger Ferris (front, centre), 1962.

Photoshot

Starman: "The girls just loved him..." Bowie takes centre-stage with The Kon-Rads at a Bromley Technical School Dance, circa 1963.

skiffle. Before long, the young Bowie was strumming a ukulele and thumping away on a washboard bass. Bowie and Underwood made their live 'debut' around a scout troop campfire on the Isle Of Wight in 1958. "Neither of us had any claim to virtuosity, but we wanted to sing," said George.

Showing an early sign of his famous unpredictability, Bowie passed his eleven-plus, but told his parents he wouldn't be attending the local grammar. He wanted to go to Bromley Technical School instead. At a time when a grammar school education was considered vastly superior, Bowie somehow convinced his parents otherwise.

"HE'D GO IN AND OUT OF THINGS, ALWAYS MOVING ON TO THE NEXT THING." George Underwood

Bowie and Underwood began attending Bromley Tech in summer 1958. The school was closely affiliated with Bromley Art College, and was pioneering a new, forward-thinking art course for its young pupils. Owen Frampton, the head of the art department, made an immediate impression. "I had a very excellent art teacher, who was an inspiration to all who where involved with him," said Bowie later. "It was an experiment for him to try to get us involved in art at a younger age."

Alamy

Apart from engaging with his pupils, Frampton also encouraged Bowie and Underwood to bring their guitars into school.

Frampton's son, Peter, another budding musician, joined the Tech later. "I got to know Bowie when I was 12 and he was 14, 15, maybe," said Peter, who after solo success in the '70s played in Bowie's backing band on the 1987 Glass Spider tour. "I said, What music do you like right now? He said, 'Buddy Holly.' I said, 'Teach me that'. I remember sitting on the stairs at lunchtime with two guitars and him and George Underwood, and the three of us would play Eddie Cochran and Buddy Holly numbers."

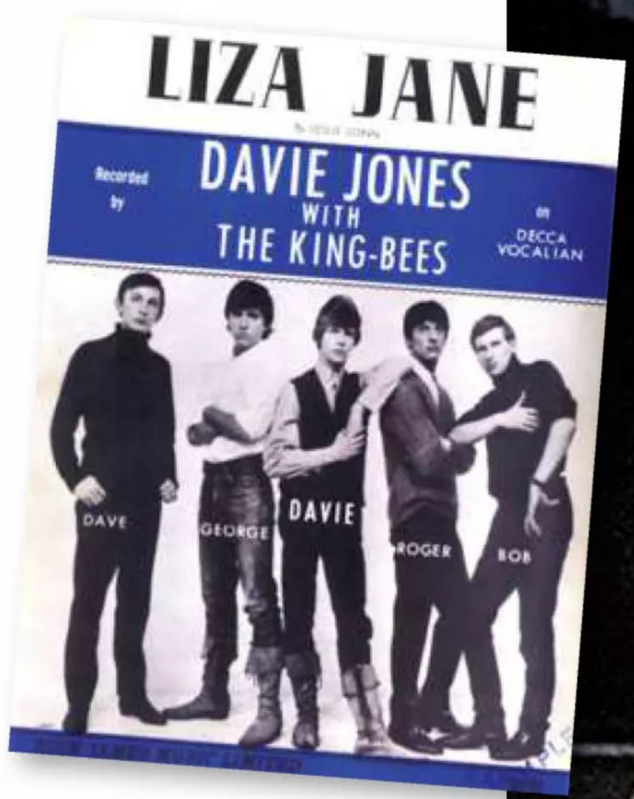
But Bowie's tastes already extended beyond rock'n'roll. Half-brother Terry had returned after a spell in the RAF, bearing jazz records and Jack Kerouac's beat bible, On The Road. Soon Bowie was immersed in a new world of John Coltrane LPs and Dean Moriarty's reefer-and-jazz fuelled road trip around America.

Anything American – from jazz to Kerouac to American football – fascinated him. "He'd go in and out of things quickly," explained Underwood. "Always moving onto the next thing. No one at ➢

that time was into American football. But David liked the image of the big shoulder pads and there was a certain glamour about the way they looked."

After Bowie wrote to the US Embassy in London about his love of the game (though he'd never seen one), he and Underwood were invited to visit the embassy, and were given a football helmet each.

Unlike many of his friends' parents, Bowie's could afford to buy him smart clothes, an American football kit and, later, a plastic alto saxophone on which he quickly became proficient. He was clever and well dressed, and his confidence soon paid off around the opposite sex. As future bandmate Alan Dodds succinctly put it: "The girls just loved him."



Suited and booted: The King Bees, with George Underwood (far left), performing their debut single, Liza Jane, on The Beat Room, June 1964.

HOWEVER IN SPRING 1962, BOWIE AND GEORGE Underwood fell out, with life-changing consequences. "When I was 14 I fell in love with a girl. I was crazy about her," claimed Bowie. "Trouble was, my best mate had a bit of a soft spot for her too. I moved in before he'd even made up his mind.... Next day I was at school boasting to my mate about what a Casanova I was and he threw a punch at me!..."

Underwood remembered it differently. "We both liked the same girl, Carol Goldsmith, so I invited her to a party," he explained. "David got absolutely rat-arsed, but I stayed sober and asked Carol out, and she said, 'Yes, next Wednesday at the youth club.' David was a competitive sort, and he was furious. On the day, he phoned me and said, 'She doesn't want to go out with you; she asked me to tell you.' I thought, 'Oh well', but went out anyway, and another friend said, 'You're late. Carol waited and then left.' David's call was complete bollocks, and when I later heard him boasting about how he'd got off with her, I saw red. I hit him. I didn't know until a week later that he'd been rushed to hospital."

When Underwood punched Bowie, his fingernail scratched the retina in his left eye. The blow paralysed a muscle, which left the iris permanently dilated, giving it the appearance of a different colour from the right eye.

It was an accident, and George was remorseful. But Bowie took a sanguine view of the injury: "Years later he said, 'You did me a favour,'" claimed Underwood. Bowie liked the fact his eyes appeared to be different colours. "People wrote to him saying, 'I'm from the same planet as you, man, and it ain't earth.'"

That summer, while Bowie was still recuperating, Underwood joined the first of several school groups. Some never made it beyond a rehearsal. One that did was a local dance band called The Kon-Rads, who hired Underwood as their new lead singer.

Bees knees: The King Bees pose in 1964. "David cried when they were thrown off stage."

Whether out of guilt or loyalty to his friend, Underwood's first suggestion to his new bandmates was that they let Bowie join as saxophonist. Bowie played his debut gig on June 12, 1962 at the Bromley Tech school fete. Before the show, there was talk of letting him sing a couple of songs, but it never happened. Instead, the wiry schoolboy with the big quiff grinned at the girls on the dancefloor and blew his plastic saxophone as the rest of The Kon-Rads chugged through a set of Shadows numbers. Bowie was simply biding his time.

Underwood was ousted from The Kon-Rads in late 1962, and replaced by Roger Ferris. Years later, Underwood insisted their new drummer David Hadfield had taken against him, something Hadfield strenuously denied. Bowie, however, chose to stick around, and quickly became good friends with Hadfield. The drummer noted how much attention David received from The Kon-Rads' female fans, "which used to annoy Roger".

The Kon-Rads fulfilled their regular bookings of college and youth club dances, sticking doggedly to a setlist of safe cover versions: Joe Brown, Conway Twitty, and, later, The Beatles and the Dave Clark Five.

Bowie constantly suggested new ideas. He urged them to try a different image, play different songs, decorate the stage. One day he arrived at rehearsals and informed his bandmates he now wanted to be known as 'David Jay'.

Rex (2)

"I WAS A BETTER SINGER BUT I HAD NOWHERE NEAR HIS CHARISMA AND PERSONALITY." *Roger Ferris, The Kon-Rads*

"I could always remember David as being different," recalled The Kon-Rads' backing singer Stella Patton. "The band all wore the same clothes but he didn't like that. He always had an exercise book with him and he would always be scribbling, writing down lyrics."

"I remember him saying he was bisexual," added guitarist Alan Dodds. "But I have to say there was absolutely no evidence for that. I think he was just up for anything that was a bit different."

When Roger Ferris trod on a broken glass before a gig in Blackheath, South London, 'David Jay' took over as lead vocalist for the night. After all, he already looked the part. "I was a better singer," Ferris insisted. "But I had nowhere near his personality or charisma on stage."

With Ferris back behind the microphone, The Kon-Rads headed off to Telstar producer Joe Meek's home studio in Holloway Road. But even Meek's tortured genius and Aladdin's Cave of recording gizmos couldn't salvage Mockingbird, The Kon-Rads' insipid take on the lullaby Hush Little Baby. Meek told the band he wasn't interested in working with them again.

A second blow came when The Kon-Rads lost out to Peter Frampton's new group on the TV talent show Ready Steady Win! Bowie was appalled. But as he'd learned in the 18th Bromley cubs: "a scout smiles ➢

◄ and whistles under all circumstances…" Like The Beatles, Frampton's band wrote their own material. Bowie told The Kon-Rads they would have to do the same.

Browbeaten by their youngest but most ambitious member, the group eventually agreed. The result was I Never Dreamed, co-written by Bowie with, according to some, guitarist Neville Willis, or else written solely by Alan Dodds. "We recorded a single with Decca or EMI I can't recall which, called I Never Dreamed, which I wrote," Dodds later told the Daily Telegraph.

It was Decca who took a chance on the band. The Kon-Rads' manager knew the Rolling Stones' co-handler Eric Easton and arranged an audition and a session at Decca's Hampstead studios. Recorded on 29 August 1963, Bowie sang backing vocals on I Never Dreamed (remembered by Roger Ferris as "a typically up-beat love song of the era"). Decca were unimpressed and a letter of 'thanks, but no thanks' arrived shortly at the manager's house. But by then The Kon-Rads' mercurial sax player and understudy lead singer had moved on.

"I think David was bit fed up at copying other people's music," said Dodds. "I never met him again." David Hadfield, however, was upset by his friend's sudden disappearing act. "I felt sad and a little betrayed," he admitted.

"I think my problem used to be that I was always shy and fairly awkward in social situations," admitted Bowie years later. "All through my youth, I would use bravado and device – costume and flamboyant behaviour – in a desperate attempt to not be iced out of everything."

IN SUMMER 1963 BOWIE FAILED ALL HIS O-LEVELS except art, after telling his careers officer he wanted to become a saxophonist in a modern jazz quartet after he left school. George Underwood witnessed the officer's shocked expression.

"I laughed my head off," he said. "But they went down the category of music careers, and the careers officer said, 'I've got an interview for a job at a harp factory in Bromley…' – which I thought was hilarious."

Rex Features

Hair today: The Society For The Prevention Of Cruelty To Long-Haired Men: Bowie (in hairnet) with The Manish Boys, on the set of the TV show Gadzooks!, '64.

"ANYONE WITH THE COURAGE TO HAVE HAIR TO THEIR SHOULDERS GOES THROUGH HELL." *David Bowie*

Instead, with Owen Frampton's help, Bowie secured a job as a runner and occasional paste-up artist at Nevin D. Hirst, a Bond Street ad agency: "I loathed it," Bowie told Q magazine. "Hirst's main product was Ayds slimming biscuits, and I also remember lots of felt-tip drawings and paste-ups of bloody raincoats. And in the evenings I dodged from one dodgy rock band to another."

Bowie joined Underwood and occasional drummer Viv Andrews in a blues duo/trio, known variously as The Hooker Brothers and David's Reds And Blues, the last a thinly veiled reference to barbiturate pills.

Instead of The Kon-Rads' smart suits and wedding reception-friendly chart covers, Bowie and Underwood opted for jeans, Chelsea boots and a clumsy reinterpretation of the blues. Bowie's quest for the next 'thing' had led him, via an older, hip friend at the ad agency, to John Lee Hooker and Muddy Waters.

Like other aspirant English bluesmen The Rolling Stones and The Detours (soon to become The Who), Bowie and his friends re-imagined themselves as black American sharecroppers. "It must have been strange – these 17-year-old kids singing 'Done lost my woman', but we went down a storm," said Underwood – though the group only played a few shows at Bromley's Bromel Club.

Bowie reasoned that if their take on the blues worked when played by a duo it would work even better with a full group, like his new favourite band The Pretty Things, whose long hair and surly demeanour was even more shocking than the Rolling Stones'.

When Bowie saw an advert in Melody Maker from a West London trio looking for a singer, he and Underwood both ended up joining. Before long, the group were calling themselves The King Bees (after bluesman Slim Harpo's I'm A King Bee). In keeping with a new group and new sound, 'David Jay' became 'Davy Jones' and, later 'Davie Jones'.

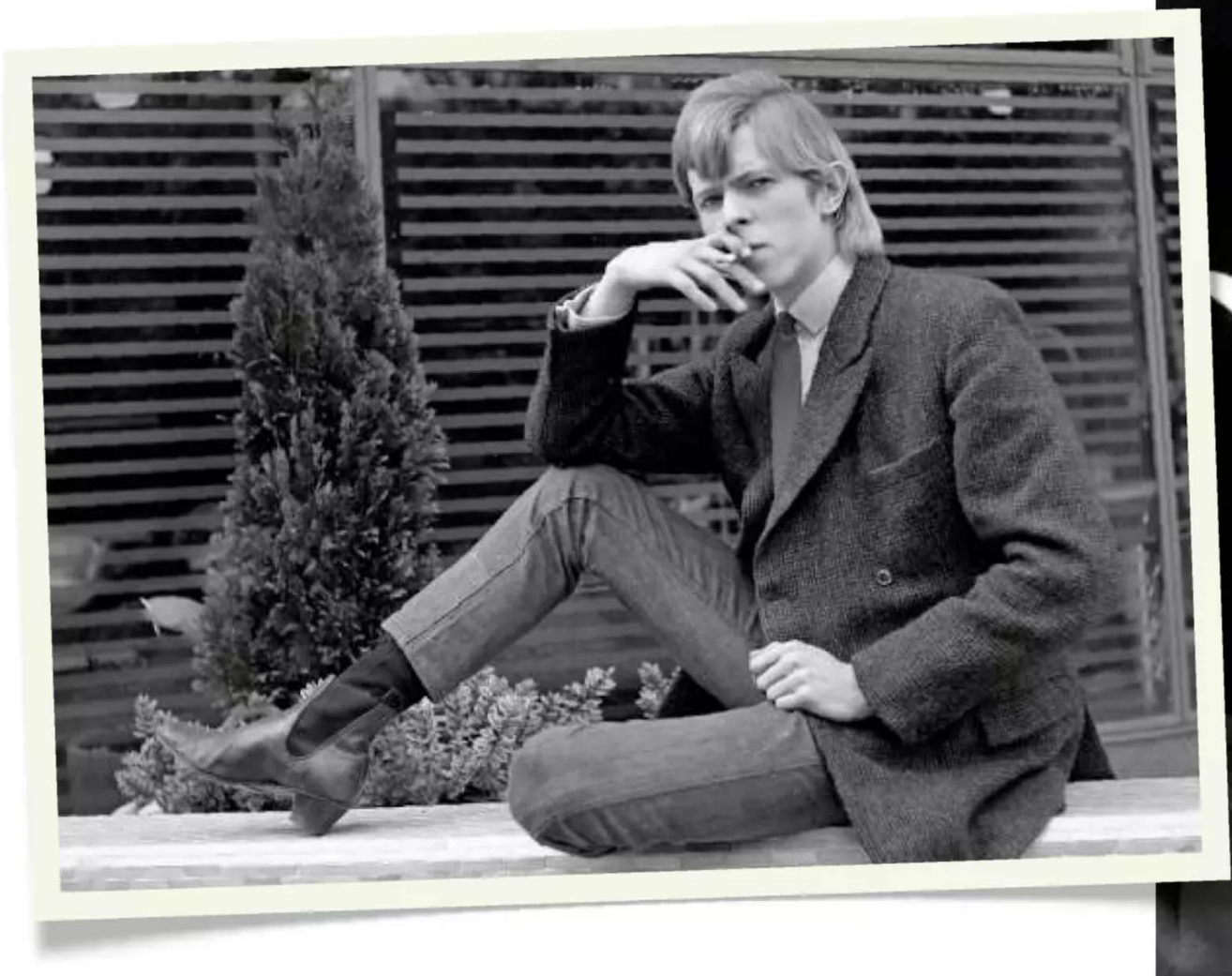
The King Bees' new leader lost no time in shocking his band-mates with his brazen self-belief. Entrepreneur John Bloom was, in the words of George Underwood, "the Richard Branson of his time". Bloom sold cheap washing machines. His slashed prices and bold advertising campaigns threatened the competition, and led to a David-and-Goliath-style stand-off with his corporate rivals Hoover and Hotpoint.

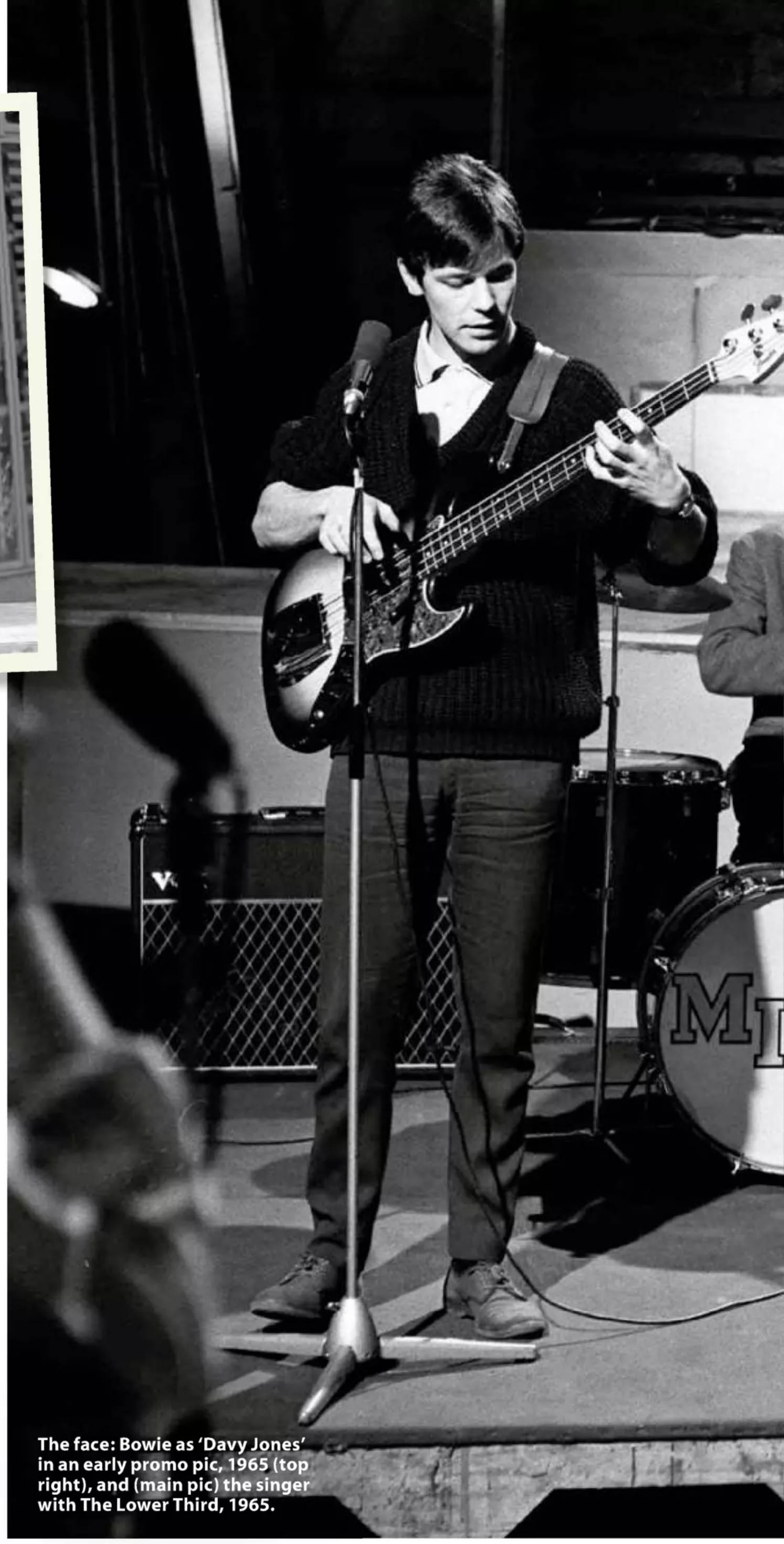
Bloom's popular image as a people's champion caught Bowie's attention. David and his father drafted a letter to Bloom. "He said, 'Brian Epstein's got The Beatles. You need us,'" recalled Underwood, who was rather embarrassed by the hard sell.

But Bowie's cheek paid off. Bloom was impressed by the pitch, and passed the letter on to his friend, Leslie Conn, who'd worked for The Beatles' publisher Dick James and had a keen eye for new talent. Bloom suggested Conn book The King Bees for Bloom's wedding anniversary party in February.

Conn watched the band audition. He had some reservations but thought Bowie was very charismatic. However, The King Bees' debut at the Jack Of Clubs in Soho's Brewer Street was a disaster. Bloom's party guests were dinner-suited captains of industry who expected to hear songs their wives could dance to. The King Bees rocked up in jeans and pitched straight into Muddy Waters's Got My Mojo Workin'. Bloom told Conn to get rid of them as quickly as possible; he had Vera Lynn and Adam Faith lined up to duet later. "David did cry when I told him," Conn told Bowie biographer Paul Trynka. "But I said to him, Don't worry. One person was impressed – and that was me."

Within weeks, Conn had become the 17-year-old Bowie's manager. Before long, he'd signed him to Dick James Music, ➢





The face: Bowie as 'Davy Jones' in an early promo pic, 1965 (top right), and (main pic) the singer with The Lower Third, 1965.

➤ put The King Bees on at the Marquee, and booked time at Decca Records' Hampstead studio to record their debut single.

Conn presented the King Bees with Louie Louie Go Home, a hit for the Idaho beat group Paul Revere And The Raiders a year earlier. For the flip side, Bowie and Underwood re-worked an old folk song and re-titled it Liza Jane, only to see Conn give himself a writing credit when the single appeared on the Vocalion label.

If Bowie objected to Conn's credit then he never said so. But then the label also credited the single to 'Davie Jones With The King Bees'. There was clearly a pecking order. Bowie threw himself into his debut lead vocal performance, but with its weedy riff and half-baked chorus, Liza Jane hardly challenged the Stones' latest, It's All Over Now, also released in June '64.

The King Bees made their TV debut on Ready Steady Go! but the single failed to chart. Despite Conn's connections, Davie Jones's band were still on the starting blocks. When Bowie and Underwood first heard Bob Dylan's debut album they'd been blown away by his version of the folk ballad House Of The Rising Sun. They wanted to re-record the song with guitars, bass and drums. The pair could only watch frustrated as Geordie R&B band The Animals did exactly that and were rewarded with a Number 1 hit in July.

By then, though, The King Bees' lead singer was already planning his escape. "I was stunned," admitted Underwood. "I couldn't believe he was leaving."

There was no malice, no recriminations. The pair would remain friends for the rest of Bowie's life. Underwood auditioned for Mickie Most and landed a solo deal: "But music was a passion I couldn't maintain." Instead, he became an artist, illustrating many album covers including *Hunky Dory* and *Ziggy Stardust*.

Bowie, meanwhile, became the new lead singer in The Manish Boys. There was just one problem: they didn't need a lead singer.

"WE DIDN'T REALLY WANT HIM, BUT WE TOOK him on anyway," was The Manish Boys' ex-keyboard player Bob Solly's description of the day he first met 'Davie Jones'. That and the singer's "rotten teeth".

It was July 1964, and the budding blues group from Maidstone, Kent had been persuaded to meet Bowie by their manager Leslie Conn: "He said, 'I've got a great singer who is in limbo at the moment. You'd be ideal for him and he'd be ideal for you.'"

"I WAS STUNNED. I COULDN'T BELIEVE HE WAS LEAVING THE GROUP." George Underwood

The Manish Boys already had a singer, but Conn pointed out that Bowie had been a recording artist once, and could be again. Bowie played them Liza Jane ("It was absolutely awful," said Solly), but charmed them into submission. After all, he was wearing a chic buckskin jacket and his hair was longer than Mick Jagger's.

The Manish Boys and their new singer embarked on dates around the southeast. It quickly became apparent that Bowie knew how to 'perform' their tough soul and R&B covers. Whether at the Soho mods' stronghold the Scene or Eel Pie Island, audiences – especially the women – stopped dancing and started to watch.

Soon enough, Bowie acquired a reputation as an enthusiastic, even obsessive ladies man: having sex with as

Topfoto

many girls as he possibly could, occasionally in the same B&B hotel room as his bandmates.

In some accounts, the future jazz singer Dana Gillespie's relationship with Bowie began when she was 14 and he was 17, and still with The Kon-Rads. Others suggest the two met later after Bowie joined The Manish Boys.

Interviewed in the Guardian after Bowie's death, Gillespie gave a vivid account of their first encounter at the Marquee: "I was brushing my hair and he took the brush and carried on brushing. He asked if he could stay at my home – a way of saying he'd missed the last train. I had a single bed, so it was a tight squeeze. I introduced him to my parents the next morning. His hair was so long, they thought he was a girl."

Gillespie's parents were, in the parlance of the day, 'bohemian intellectuals' who allowed her a great degree of freedom. When Gillespie visited Bowie's family, she encountered "a working-class household, where people sat glued to the television set". After her world of books, music and conversation, the Jones' suburban habitat was a shock: "One time David said, 'Whatever I do, I want to get out of here. I do not want to live like this."

When they weren't sharing her single bed, the couple floated around Soho with Leslie Conn's other protégé, Marc Feld. Bowie and Feld, who would later become 'Marc Bolan', would spend hours over a cup of coffee, outlining their grand musical schemes, and trying to upstage each other. "It was a wild time," said Gillespie, "Hanging out in this whole music world."

Dana's description of Bowie's "Veronica Lake-style long hair" was pivotal to his next publicity coup. One afternoon, a BBC researcher approached Bowie and The Manish Boys' sax player Woolf Byrne in a café. He needed interviewees for a TV show, and asked whether their long hair had ever caused problems. The singer coolly announced that they'd formed The Society For The Prevention Of Cruelty To Long-Haired Men.

The society didn't exist; it was a fantasy dreamed up by Bowie. But the Evening News soon sent reporter and future Virgin Soldiers novelist Leslie Thomas to interview the oppressed pop singer.

"Anyone who has the courage to wear hair down to his shoulders has to go through hell," Bowie told Thomas. "Everybody makes jokes about you on a bus, and if you go past navvies digging in the road, it's murder!"

Photoshot

Ziggy played guitar: Bowie at home strumming his electric 12-string, London, 1966.

The Manish Boys made their TV debut on Tonight With Cliff Michelmore 10 days after the article appeared. Bowie, his hair lapping his shoulders and his tongue firmly in cheek, told the host: "We're all fairly tolerant, but for the last two years we've had comments like 'Darlin'' and 'Can I carry your handbag' thrown at us. And it has to stop!"

The bullshit worked. The Manish Boys embarked on a package tour of the UK with Gerry And The Pacemakers and Gene Pitney, and cut a single with The Who's first producer Shel Talmy.

"We had a two-hour slot at the recording studio, and did two cuts each of Pity The Fool and one of David's own songs, Take My Tip," recalled Bob Solly. Pity The Fool had been recorded by Memphis bluesman Bobby Bland: "It wasn't very commercial, a bit plodding." Talmy had booked young session hotshot Jimmy Page to play guitar on the record. As he was packing up afterwards , Page coldly informed them their single wasn't going to be a hit.

Pity The Fool appeared in March '65, with Take My Tip on the B-side. Bowie's composition was uninspired save for the fact he sang in an English rather than American accent. Conn persuaded the BBC to book The Manish Boys for their music show Gadzooks! He then falsely claimed the Beeb had banned them from the show until they had their hair cut. The fake controversy led to even more publicity.

Unfortunately, all the PR stunts in the world couldn't save Pity The Fool. Or The Manish Boys. The single flopped, and their live dates dried up. Once again, there was no great falling out. After their final show, Bowie chose to spend the night with a female fan rather than travelling back to Kent with the rest of the band.

As recently as 2013, Bowie would still telephone Bob Solly, sometimes after a year or two without contact, and jokily ask as his opening gambit: "Do you want to join a band, Bob?"

THE LOWER THIRD WERE AN UP-and-coming R&B group from Margate, Kent, who'd moved to London in '64. Shortly after they arrived, they spotted Bowie promenading through Soho. With his long blonde hair, he was a dead ringer for The Yardbirds' frontman Keith Relf.

Unlike The Manish Boys, The Lower Third needed a lead singer, and held auditions at La Discotheque in Soho's Wardour Street. Bowie arrived with his saxophone and his friend, future Small Faces frontman Steve Marriott, in tow. Marriott sang with the group, before suddenly leaving.

Bowie wasn't as good a vocalist as Marriott but, again, he impressed The Lower Third with his energy and ideas. And his track record looked good on paper: he'd made a record and also had The Who's producer in his corner: Shel Talmy believed Bowie had 'something', but wasn't entirely sure what it was.

It took all of a fortnight for Bowie to assume control of the group. Davy Jones And The Lower Third released their Talmy-produced single, You've Got A Habit Of Leaving Me, on Parlophone in August '65. It was a clunky pastiche of The Who, with Bowie singing in a strangulated whine. It sunk without trace. By now, Leslie Conn's patience and money had run out. It didn't matter. Bowie had already found a replacement: ex-Moody Blues roadie Ralph Horton, whose first suggestion was a name change.

Getty

Davy Jones already had a new name in mind, after actor Richard Widmark's character, Jim Bowie, in the movie The Alamo. The new monicker was also a way of drawing a line under past lives – and failures – with The Manish Boys and The King Bees.

'Davy Jones' became 'David Bowie' in time for The Lower Third's tours with The Pretty Things and The Who. On and off-stage Bowie's impeccable dress sense – always the *right* shirt, the right shoes – quickly marked him out as a 'face' on the mod scene. Once again, he'd spotted a fad, like jazz or American football, albeit a little late, and fully embraced it.

Pete Townshend recalled seeing the 19-year-old Bowie and his accomplice, the future Marc Bolan, peacocking around the Scene and other clubs. "We thought Marc Bolan was gay," Townshend told MOJO. "We thought David Bowie was gay. We thought all the cool people were gay."

Others who knew him around this time echo Alan Dodds's claim that Bowie told him he was bisexual. It was a period of experimentation and blurred sexuality. Bowie was willing to be whatever anyone wanted him to be, or what they *imagined* him to be: mod, rocker, gay, straight…

"WE THOUGHT DAVID BOWIE WAS GAY. WE THOUGHT ALL THE COOL PEOPLE WERE GAY." *Pete Townshend*

Ralph Horton introduced his young charge to Pye's in-house producer Tony Hatch. Like Shel Talmy, Hatch saw 'something' in Bowie and offered to produce The Lower Third's next single, Can't Help Thinking About Me.

Released in January '66 it paid lip service to The Who's The Kids Are Alright, but was a step up from its predecessor. Bowie's tale of a prodigal son spurned by his family but yearning for his lost innocence contained the telling lines, "Now I leave them all in the never-never land… I hope I make it on my own."

The single performed better than You've Got A Habit Of Leaving Me. But barely a fortnight later, The Lower Third split after a dispute with Ralph Horton over money. Bowie reportedly burst into tears, but made no attempt to dissuade Horton from replacing his bandmates.

Bowie's next group, The Buzz, had no illusions about their status. "From day one, we knew this was David and a backing band," said Buzz drummer John 'Ego' Eager. But a subsequent single, a tepid soul/R&B rave-up, Do Anything You Say, simply credited to 'David Bowie', felt like another step backwards.

When the single flopped, Bowie barely batted an eyelid. His self-belief and single-mindedness was such that he was still convinced he would make it. Like Leslie Conn, Ralph Horton would soon run low on patience and money. But by then, he'd mentioned Bowie to his friend, PR/manager Ken Pitt.

Pitt had worked with artists as diverse as Manfred Mann, Bob Dylan and Liberace. Intrigued by Horton's description of the unusual singer with the mod clothes and unshakable confidence, he went to see Bowie and The Buzz at The Marquee.

Just before the last song of the night, the stage was plunged into darkness and a spotlight picked out the lead singer. Bowie launched into a solo rendition of Rodgers And Hammerstein's showstopper You'll Never Walk Alone. Pitt was astonished. As Bowie later told DJ Johnny Moran at the Marquee, "I used to be somebody else." But that somebody was gone. Ken Pitt was now looking at a future superstar. Ⓜ

Photoshot

THE BOY ABOUT TOWN

In the late '60s, David Bowie confused his fans – and himself – as he transformed from mod to hippie, mime artist to actor, Buddhist to bohemian, in pursuit of success. One man kept faith throughout those years – Bowie's then-manager Ken Pitt. Chris Welch hears mesmerising tales of drunken parties, concerned parents and boundless creativity, culminating in the 1969 Number 1 single Space Oddity.

ONE SPRING AFTER noon in 1967, I was interviewing The Nice at their flat in Earls Court when their guitarist David O'List produced a new album he insisted I hear. He walked over to the radiogram, dropped the needle on the record and we sat entranced on the floor surrounded by LP sleeves and Rizlas. The music was far removed from the Hammond-blasting thunder of The Nice, but everyone was intrigued by the quirkiness of the songs. It turned out to be David Bowie's forthcomingdebut LP – with Uncle Arthur, Sell Me A Coat, Rubber Band, Love You Till Tuesday, et al – and we'd been granted a sneak preview because The Nice's drummer Brian Davidson had previously been in a band managed by respected pop operator Ken Pitt, now Bowie's business representative.

"HE WASN'T REALLY INTO ROCK'N'ROLL. HE LIKED JAZZ AND BLUES AND CLASSICAL."

AS A STAFF WRITER on Melody Maker, I was determined to spread the word about this intriguing singer from south London, but it was an uphill battle to get anybody to take any notice. Still, David Bowie had several allies in the weekly music press, notably Penny Valentine of Disc, who loved him and wrote about him whenever possible. I reviewed his single Love You Till Tuesday, the follow-up to the frankly bizarre The Laughing Gnome: "While his voice has Anthony Newley connotations, it matters little while he makes fine records of this ilk."

The problem at the Maker was that whenever I suggested an interview with a new artist, the editor would look askance and start talking about the need for in-depth coverage of The Monkees. After all, who the hell was David Bowie?

A little over two years later, our suspicions that Bowie had an unusual talent turned out to be correct. By then, pop music was in flux. The Beatles were unravelling, the Summer of Love was a distant memory, rock albums were taking over from singles, and the carefree mood of the '60s was fast coming to an end. In July 1969, amid this atmosphere of uncertainty, came the release of Space Oddity, an extraordinary song about an astronaut adrift in space, issued as a single to coincide with NASA's moon landing attempt.

Everyone proclaimed Space Oddity a work of genius and held their breath, awaiting another masterstroke. But nothing happened. Even in 1969, three years before Ziggy Stardust touched down to beguile and bewilder, Bowie was sending out confused messages.

I eventually met Bowie in autumn '69 at the Maker's favourite pub, the Red Lion in Fleet Street, which, uniquely in those days, had a Chinese restaurant upstairs. It was before the midday rush and David arrived alone. We sat in an empty bar for a friendly chat. The young Bowie – he was 22 – gave me the impression of frailty combined with an inner strength. He laughed and smiled and joked, but he was also deadly serious about his ideas and had clearly formed opinions.

As we talked, it became apparent he was already disenchanted with the 'underground'. He had helped organise the free festival in Beckenham Park in August 1969, the subject of a song on the self-titled album he'd just released on Philips (later reissued as *Space Oddity* to differentiate it from his eponymous debut on Deram). His music was already changing and growing.

Earlier in the year, he'd been heavily involved in the Beckenham Arts Lab, a music/poetry/performance night held at the Three Tuns pub in Beckenham High Street, but had become disillusioned when he realised people were only coming to see him perform, rather than participate themselves. He spoke disparagingly about hippies, and said he was turning to Buddhism for inspiration. I got the feeling that David at that point in his life could easily have fled London and done something completely different.

Listening to Bowie in full flow it was difficult not to be won over by his charm and intelligence, and you could see why he had such an impact on everyone he met. His friends had never given up on him, and he said that he had to keep on writing songs, even if his record company would turn them down.

With a Number 1 hit under his belt, Bowie had come a long way since that first album I heard at The Nice's flat. And one of the key reasons for that was his manager, Ken Pitt – undoubtedly one of the friends who'd never given up on him and an early, unflinching believer in Bowie's potential.

Pitt was an experienced former journalist and publicist who had a distinguished career working with some of the biggest names in show business. Frank Sinatra called him "my man in London" and singers Mel Tormé, Johnny Ray and Billy Eckstine were among his clients. He'd also shared an apartment with James Dean, and had dealings with Andy Warhol and Lou Reed in 1966, long before The Velvet Underground's infamy spread to London.

When David Bowie shared a West End flat with Pitt, just around the corner from EMI's offices in Manchester Square, he had access to a lifetime of experience. Pitt had moved into management during the beat boom era, handling Manfred Mann as well as The Mark Leeman Five. He had been asked to take on Bowie by the singer's previous manager, the former Moody Blues roadie Ralph Horton.

Pitt first saw Bowie at The Marquee Club in Wardour Street on a Sunday, April 17, 1966. By then, the singer was stepping out with The Buzz, and was no longer 'Davy Jones', who'd fronted R&B bands The Kon-Rads, The King Bees and The Manish Boys.

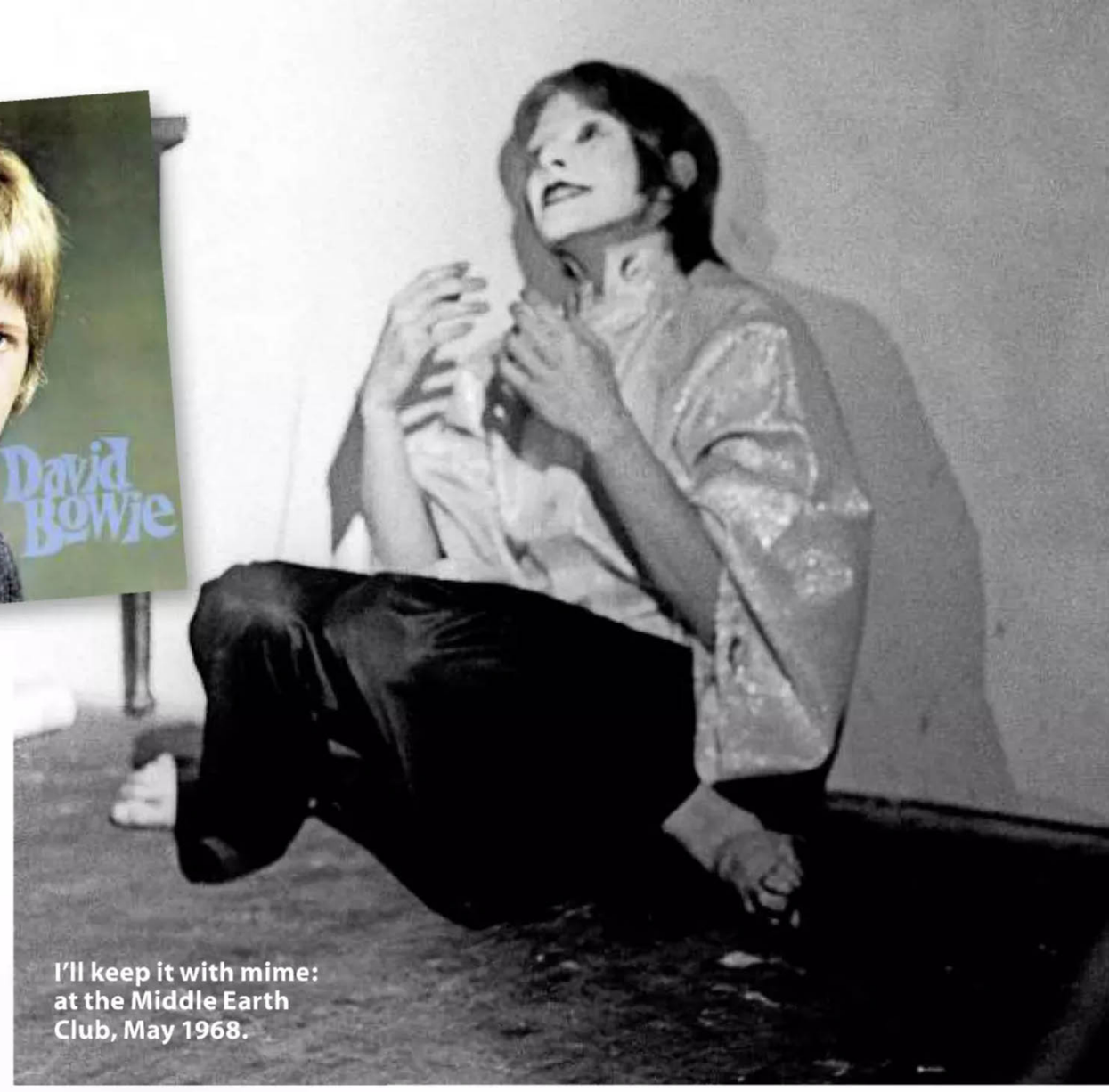
"I first heard about David Jones through Lionel Bart," Pitt told me in 2003. "Long before I even saw David, I said to Ralph Horton that he should change his name because there was a Davy Jones in The Monkees. I even had a David Jones working in my office. While I was in America in 1966, I received a letter from Ralph saying, 'By the way, David has changed his surname. It's now Bowie.' When I eventually saw him at the Marquee he was performing [an afternoon series titled] the Bowie Showboat.

"Ralph had asked me if I could manage David some weeks earlier," he continues. "But I knew I couldn't take him on because I was going to America. Standing at the back of the Marquee watching Bowie, I realised right away he was somebody very different. I'd never seen an artist like him. When the show was over and the people were leaving, David walked up to me and I was delighted to find he had an amazing sense of humour." ➢

Tracks Ltd

Wild-eyed boy: waiting for the world to catch up, Paddington, 1968, with mentor and manager Ken Pitt looking on.

An actor's life: as part of Lindsay Kemp's troupe, early 1968.


I'll keep it with mime: at the Middle Earth Club, May 1968.

➢ David was living with his parents in Bromley at the time, but when he performed in London he would stay with Ralph in Victoria. Horton had done his best for Bowie, but realised he needed help to develop his career. Pitt's suitability as his cohort was cemented by the musical enthusiasms the manager shared with his charge-to-be.

"David was still singing R&B at that time, but he was never really into rock'n'roll," recalls Pitt. "He liked jazz, blues and classical music. We'd read the same books and heard the same artists and I could see he was excited. He suddenly said to Ralph, 'Let's do a deal with Ken,' and that's how it started. Not that there was much I could do to start with. It turned out they were in a dreadful situation financially, living from hand to mouth.

"The morning after our first meeting I had lots of bills arriving on my desk. They included one from Pye Records. It seems Ralph had purchased a large number of David's records and never paid for them. So my first duty was to write an apology to the boss of Pye. I also discovered they had never paid their electricity bill so it was always being cut off. Ralph was a skilled electrician and he'd managed to tap into the electricity supply under the pavement where he lived in Warwick Square. I had to put his affairs in order and I dealt with all the money. Not that there was much coming in, but all the bills were paid."

Initially, Pitt's role was to look after the financial affairs, while Horton handled day-to-day business. Bowie and his group did plenty of live work through 1966, and Pye had persevered with his recording career, too. However, Do Anything You Say (April 1966), I Dig Everything (August '66) and Rubber Band (December 1966) only served to extend his singles tally to six flops.

"THEY WERE IN A DREADFUL SITUATION FINANCIALLY, LIVING HAND TO MOUTH."

By the start of 1967, Ralph Horton had gracefully bowed out of the picture, and Pitt became Bowie's sole manager and, more significantly, his mentor. He thought it appropriate at that time to meet with Bowie's father.

"They lived in Sundridge Park near Bromley, and we met at the local station," said Pitt. "He was a nice man, although I don't think he really understood what David was trying to do. He was nervous about the idea of David being in show business. I think he thought David should 'settle down and get a real job'. It certainly wasn't looked upon as a real job in those days. But he was prepared to encourage him and give the idea a chance.

"He would ring up and write me letters, asking if I thought David was doing the right thing. I was only sorry he didn't live to see all the wonderful things that happened." (Bowie's father died in August 1969, shortly before Space Oddity became a hit.)

Pitt found that David was extremely easy-going but knew he was unsettled about life at home. His father got up early in the morning for his job at Dr Barnado's, while David's lifestyle involved playing records and writing songs long into the early hours; inevitably this caused friction. David visited Ken's flat and told him about the problems and, in late spring 1967, Pitt offered a solution.

"I told him I had a spare room and he could move in there," he remembered. "His face lit up. It was a big relief for him. His father was marvellous about it and actually brought him up to town. His mother provided a put-u-up bed for him to sleep on. When David moved out he left the bed behind and it became a lounger for my mother. It was last seen in the garden shed at her home."

Manager and artist managed to rub along fine. "David didn't bother me with all his noise," says Pitt. "I only complained about him burning joss sticks. That was the worst our relationship ever got. He was always in and out and he used to write notes and leave them on the stairs – things like he had a photo session that day so he wouldn't be able to cook. We used to eat out an Italian restaurant."

PART OF KEN'S PUBLICITY PLAN WAS TO TAKE David to important music biz gatherings, though things didn't always go to plan. "We were invited to a party attended by people who could give David broadcasts and TV work. I was chatting them up, but it was obviously a big bore for him. Then a producer said, 'Is that your wonderful David Bowie?' I turned round and saw him with some bird sprawling all over him. I thought they were going to copulate in front of the British music industry. So I left without him and went back home."

Later that night, he returned to the flat with the young lady in tow. "The next thing I know, he's vomiting in the bathroom," says Pitt. "I told the girl, 'I don't think he'll be much use to you tonight.' She said, 'Oh alright', picked up her bag and left. Not long afterwards, out comes his lordship and goes racing down the stairs after her. He falls headlong down the stairs and ends up in a heap. I managed to get him back up to the room, while he called me all the names under the sun. When he woke up the next morning, he'd forgotten all about it."

But Bowie clearly hadn't forgotten about his ambitions, which were breaking out in all directions under the influence of his cultured new manager – acting, scriptwriting, writing songs for other artists. Meanwhile, Pitt had secured him a deal with Decca's new progressive imprint, Deram, which released his self-titled debut in June. The songs were mostly stories accompanied by elaborate orchestrations. "David had always wanted to be a writer," explains Pitt. "These were songs he'd been writing since his teens and for a 19 year old they were quite remarkable. Lots of ideas came from something his mother might have said, like There Is A Happy Land. Nobody else was doing that sort of thing at the time and [those songs] impressed me. On the sessions David sang 'live' ➢

Rex (2)

with the orchestra and he was very nervous to see all these real musicians lined up.

"We really planned the Deram album like a CV," Pitt adds. "We never thought it would sell or that anyone would buy it except ourselves. I get upset when writers refer to it as a flop – it was a great success and achieved its object. People now look back on it as being rather special. When Love You Till Tuesday came out as a single, it was released in America and got a good review."

Pitt bought 50 copies of *David Bowie* and sent them to key figures he thought might be able to help David's career, including mime artist Lindsay Kemp. "Lindsay was one of the great influences on his early career," said Pitt. "David went to him for classes in mime and then joined Lindsay's troupe and appeared in his shows."

For the first three months of 1968, Bowie performed in Kemp's Pierrot In Turquoise, playing the the ephemeral Cloud (wearing a costume he'd revisit 12 years later for the Ashes To Ashes video) and singing a handful of specially written songs.

"David already wanted to be an actor and was capable of so many different things," Pitt says. "He wanted to write musicals. It was all down to evolution, and David was evolving constantly, sometimes from day to day. It was difficult to keep up with his train of thought. He used to store things up for later, like his idea for Ziggy Stardust."

There was plenty to fire Bowie's imagination in Pitt's flat, including a library of books and classical music. "Holst's Planets Suite became a great favourite," says Pitt. "There are many shades and colours in that which you can hear in David's music."

"DAVID WAS EVOLVING CONSTANTLY. IT WAS DIFFICULT TO KEEP UP."

WHILE PITT ENCOURAGED BOWIE'S PASSION for mime and acting, he believes that the singer's interest in Buddhism has been overplayed. "I don't think he was that interested, though I do remember him meeting a Buddhist monk at my Curzon Street office."

Pitt recalled that, at the time, Bowie was going through a period of neglecting his appearance and personal hygiene, as he'd read that Buddhism taught its followers that you shouldn't be concerned with exterior image. "Then the monk walked in wearing a lovely yellow gown, with beautiful leather sandals, and a jewel between his toes. He was drenched in glorious perfume. It was very funny. To say that David was gobsmacked is an understatement."

"I think I preferred David as a mod," Pitt adds. "He was into Vespas and military jackets. He summed up mod culture with some of his early songs, because he was so observant. He wanted to sing about the mods he saw hanging around Wardour Street. All these images got lodged in his mind and would come out in songs like The London Boys."

After Love You Till Tuesday in July 1967, there wasn't another single release until Space Oddity in July 1969. Bowie continued to perform, often to small audiences, recorded sessions for the BBC and even appeared in a television commercial for Lyons Maid ice-lollies. Then came Space Oddity, the song with which Bowie finally found his audience.

"It all came about because I decided to do a demonstration film [Love You Till Tuesday] showing everything David could do. I wanted something that would show him visually. I would then take it round to the BBC and say, Would you please watch this?"

With a mime routine and versions of new songs with a makeshift trio Feathers – including then girlfriend Hermione Farthingale – in the bag, Pitt asked Bowie and director Malcolm Thompson to come up with something else to add to the film. A little later, the director phoned Pitt and said: "I think he's got it. David has just played me something which is just what you're looking for."

The pair returned to the flat on Manchester Street to unveil the new song. "David sat on the edge of my chaise longue and sang me Space Oddity," says Pitt, proudly. "It was incredible. The first recording was a demo disc and the next recording was the backing track for the film. It was quite a fight to get it accepted. It really had nothing to do with the space mission Apollo 11, I was just concerned with getting a song for the film. We didn't know much about the NASA mission, although David was always interested in space exploration."

His manager attributes its lift-off to an airing it received at The Rolling Stones' free concert in London's Hyde Park on July 5, 1969. "The DJ played Space Oddity to thousands of people in the park. It was also played on TV. I heard people singing it in the streets and 'Major Tom' became a popular character.

"It began to slowly climb up the charts and got to Number 5 [in late autumn]. I was told it was deliberately squashed in America because of the sadness of a space man disappearing in a 'tin can' just when they were sending one of their own men to the moon. I guess they thought Space Oddity was wryly ironic, and of course it was."

SPACE ODDITY'S SUCCESS LAUNCHED BOWIE into the public consciousness, but it made the singer more confused about where he should take his career next. According to Pitt, producer Tony Visconti had predicted that the song would become the kind of novelty hit that is impossible to follow up (he delegated its recording to Gus Dudgeon), which is what happened initially.

In the months following its success, Pitt and Bowie parted company, thanks in part to an American in London named Angela Barnett, Bowie's girlfriend and a major influence in his life, both personally (they married in March 1970) and professionally.

"We had a very good relationship until outside people and predators began to interfere," Pitt explains. "It happens so often. It was a shame. People were saying, 'I can do better for you.'"

It was two years before Bowie had another hit, with Starman from *Ziggy Stardust*, but it's the Bowie of 1969 who Pitt believes will always define the singer.

"People think of Space Oddity when they think of David Bowie," he says. "It appealed to all age groups and tastes. Ziggy Stardust only appealed to rock'n'rollers. People might remember this tricky fellow with red hair but they wouldn't remember what he did. Yet everyone remembers David Bowie as the boy who hit with Space Oddity." Ⓜ

Pub whiz: at the Beckenham Arts Lab in the Three Tuns, 1969.

Photoshot, Rex

God knows he's good: David circa Space Oddity. "He was capable of so many different things."

INTO TOMO

In 1964, The Who were an R&B covers act working West London's roughest thanks to the emergence of a gifted songwriter in their ranks. Pat Gilbert

RROW

pubs. But within a year they would become the voice of a generation, charts their ill-tempered transformation from mods to Pop Art rockers.

SOHO, NOVEMBER 1964 – not just a safehouse for the exotic in the humdrum, post-war sprawl of Greater London, but possibly the most exciting square mile in Europe, even the world. Cut through Old Compton Street and Wardour Street, and you'd be entering a noisy, aromatic turf of cappuccino bars, Italian eateries, speed-fuelled basement clubs, illicit gay hang-outs and risky late-night drinking dens, all vying for attention among Soho's more established attractions: the fruit and veg markets, knocking shops, gangster pubs, peepshows and neon-lit sex boutiques.

Amid this jumble of local colour, the monochrome poster set on the pavement outside the Marquee club must have been eye-catching in its simplicity. In one corner it showed a sharply dressed teenager, with a high-cut fringe and a crew-neck sweater, windmilling his arm across the strings of a Rickenbacker. Below, the words "The Who" stood out boldly in large white type, the 'o' signing off with an arrow thrusting skyward like the male Mars symbol. Underneath ran the legend "Maximum R&B".

The Who had begun their Tuesday night Marquee residency in November 1964, around the time they'd reverted to their original name, having trading for eight months as The High Numbers. In the territorial carve-up of London 'manors' that characterised the '60s, the West Londoners were virtually on foreign terrain. But following an effusive review in Melody Maker by Nick Jones, the schoolboy son of the paper's jazz critic Max, the queues along Wardour Street began snaking around the block. No longer just a phenomenon of the frenzied mod hives of Acton and Harrow, where they could regularly pull several hundred punters, The Who were quickly becoming the hub of the swinging London scene. The key to their success? On-stage, they were like nothing before.

"They were absolutely sensational," recalls Roger Powell, drummer with support band The Action, who like many other bands were in awe of The Who's backline of 4x12-inch Marshall cabs and American Fender Pro amplifiers. "Even though they were still raw, they were amazing – a total audio-visual experience, a wall of sound and energy. Keith Moon was taking drumming in this totally new direction. John Entwistle just stood there, doing this incredible bass playing, while Townshend and Daltrey were giving everything up front. They were brilliant, mind-blowing."

Yet for all their power on-stage, at the end of 1964 The Who were still essentially an R&B and soul covers band, just one of scores of acts in the capital – and many hundreds more across the country – who pulled in a modest wage by bashing out versions of hardy perennials like Green Onions and Smokestack Lightnin' plus the hottest Tamla Motown and Stateside releases of the day. As Richard Barnes, their friend, biographer and early promoter, wryly points out, "They were good then, but still not really that good."

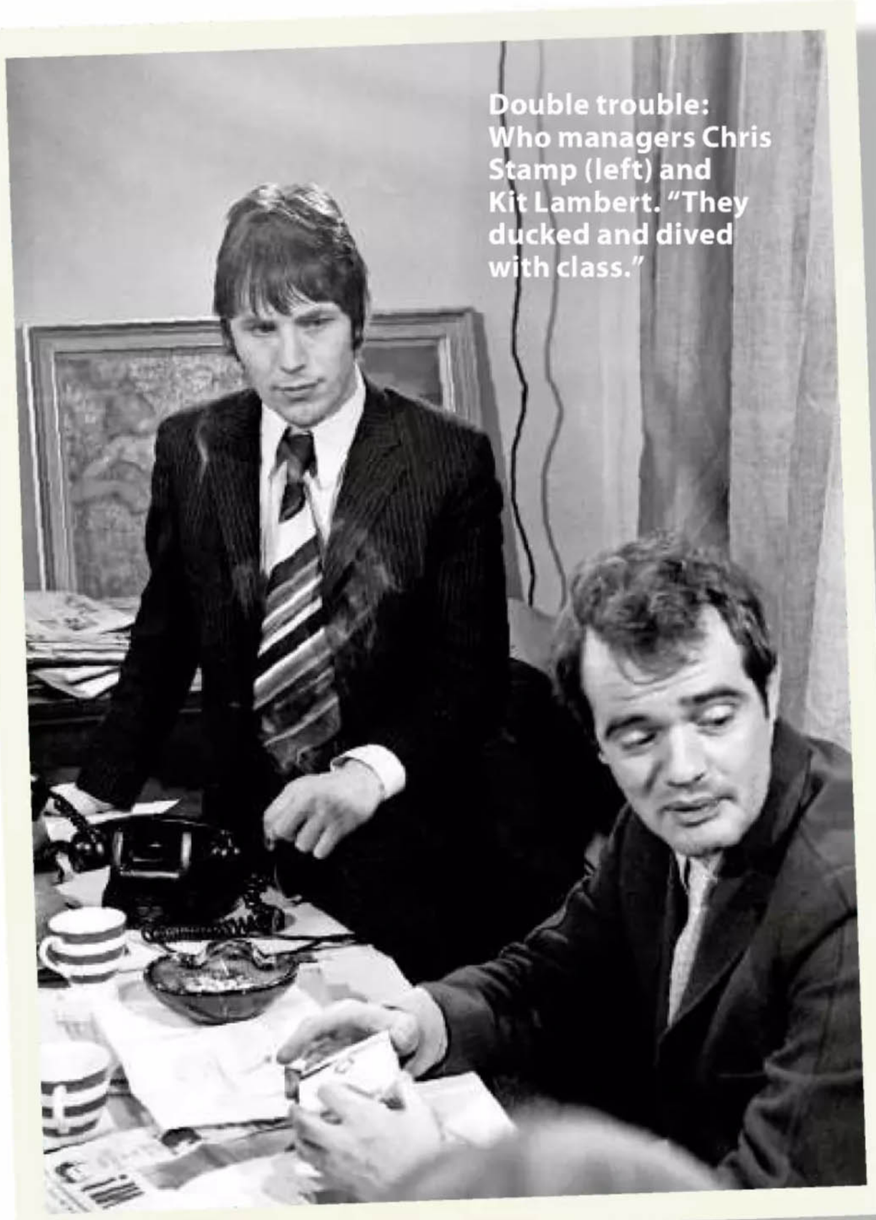
But within 12 months things would change dramatically. Under the tutelage of Kit Lambert and Chris Stamp, one of the most outlandish management partnerships the business has seen, The Who would transform into the first and most controversial rock group in the country and, via a handful of extraordinary songs – I Can't Explain, Anyway Anyhow Anywhere, My Generation, The Kids Are Alright – 19-year-old Pete Townshend would emerge as the most exciting young songwriter of his day. Being The Who, however, this didn't happen without numerous dramas, including Roger Daltrey being fired, the management incurring debts that would bankrupt them for years, and their producer being dismissed in circumstances that remain contentious to this day. And then there was the unfortunate incident at Battersea Dogs Home where all the band's gear disappeared…

THE SIMPLE THREE-chord trick that kicked off I Can't Explain had been perfected by Townshend sometime towards the end of 1964, at the rented flat above his parents' home in the leafy West London suburb of Ealing which he shared with his old art school pal Richard Barnes. At the time, Britain was being wowed by a new group from another part of London – north – whose proto-metal classic You Really Got Me was redefining British pop music and laying the foundations of rock. Having assimilated The Kinks' hit into The Who's set, Townshend essayed his own retort, a limp and mildly Beatlesy song called It Was You, later recorded by Parlophone signings The Naturals. But then came the Townshend-penned number that would establish the quartet as The Kinks' closest rivals.

I Can't Explain, a nervy paean to teenage inarticulacy, built around a stuttering guitar riff and Moon's machine-gun fire drum fills, was released in January 1965 via a deal with independent producer Shel Talmy – the man credited as producer of The Kinks' You Really Got Me – and Brunswick Records, US Decca's British imprint. To push the single, the group appeared on the nation's essential Friday night pop fix, Ready Steady Go!. Due to the absence of a crowd booker, they were able to cram in 100-odd of their own mod 'faces' from Shepherd's Bush, thus ensuring that they looked like the most popular new band on the planet.

Tellingly, both these coups de grâces – the deal and the 'night of 100 faces' – were the work of Kit Lambert, one half of The Who's New Action

Made mods: (from left) Entwistle, Daltrey, Moon and Townshend as 'The High Numbers', Piccadilly Circus, June 1964.


Double trouble: Who managers Chris Stamp (left) and Kit Lambert. "They ducked and dived with class."

Getty

"KIT LAMBERT WAS SHARP AND HAD IDEAS. YOU COULDN'T HELP BEING IMPRESSED BY HIM." ROGER DALTREY

management team. Lambert was a charismatic, faintly dangerous figure, who'd wrested The High Numbers from the control of legendary publicist Peter Meaden in summer '64 for £500.

Richard Barnes: "Kit turned up at the Railway Hotel in Harrow Wealdstone, where I was promoting The High Numbers. I was shit-scared of him, because he looked so straight. He was around 30 and was wearing a really expensive Savile Row suit. He looked trouble."

Roger Daltrey: "He seemed completely out of place, really flamboyant. He had this upper-class accent that was so out of kilter with everyone else's. He said, 'Hi, I'm a film producer.' He wanted to make a film about the West London mods. He was sharp, he had ideas. You couldn't help being impressed."

The son of Constant Lambert, the classical composer, Kit was an Oxford graduate whose sense of adventure was wonderfully irrepressible. Having experimented with drink and drugs at university, he served as an army officer before joining an expedition to Brazil in 1961 to chart the course of the Iriri River. When the expedition leader was speared to death by a remote tribe of natives, Kit's party were stranded for several days in the jungle. This experience seemed only to have exaggerated his fearlessness.

Alamy

Kit's partner in New Action was Chris Stamp, the younger brother of actor Terence, then about to make his reputation in the screen adaptation of John Fowles' The Collector. Stamp and Lambert had met while they were working as assistant directors on The L-Shaped Room. Daltrey: "Chris was like this East End barrow boy, an amazing-looking, hip guy. Better looking even than his brother. They made an odd pair but effervesced enthusiasm."

Barnes: "They were brilliant, those two – serious ducking and diving with class. The mixture of Chris's East End suss, living on the streets, the son of a tugboat man, working hard, and Kit's aristocratic bearing and his family's connections wasn't a combination you'd want to mess with."

New Action began working out of Stamp and Lambert's flat at 113 Ivor Court, off Baker Street, in the autumn of 1964. Stamp was usually conspicuous by his absence, working abroad on films like The Heroes Of Telemark, from which he'd send back his wages in a struggle to keep the group afloat. Following the release of I Can't Explain in early 1965, after a run-in with the bailiffs (soon to become a regular thing) New Action moved to Eaton Place, Belgravia, where Kit installed Pete Townshend in the flat above the office-cum-apartment, along with a couple of Revox tape machines.

Lambert had recognised an important fact: an R&B covers band, albeit one that cooked up a glorious noise, had a limited shelf-life; a band sustained by a repertoire of songs as great as I Can't ➢

Taking off: The Who perform at the Cook's Ferry Inn, Edmonton, London, March 1965.

Explain could last for years. The Beatles had done it, The Kinks were doing it, now even the Stones were making a career from releasing their own compositions. Why not The Who?

"WE ALWAYS KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING special," says Daltrey. "We were such individual characters – it's something we've played up in the press a lot during the years." But, played up or not, everybody agrees that the four young men who made up The Who were radically different creatures.

Raised in Notting Hill and Shepherd's Bush, Daltrey was the hair-trigger hard-nut and ladies' man, a former sheet-metal worker who initially booked all the band's gigs and drove the group in his ex-telephone repairs van. Entwistle, meanwhile, a former schoolboy star of the Middlesex Youth Orchestra and a one-time tax officer, was a quiet, introverted man who, according to Shel Talmy, "literally never uttered one word in the whole year I worked with them". Moon was, of course, the lunatic exploding drummer, an impish, witty, insecure jester who provided the perfect foil for Pete Townshend's creative temperament and art-school graduate nous.

That Lambert took Townshend under his wing is no surprise. Like Kit, Townshend had a daring, inquisitive mind and musical background, though his parents were popular, rather than classical, players (his father a clarinet player, his mother a singer).

Townshend: "Kit's grooming started with etiquette and showing Keith and me the right wines and so on. Up to the last years of his life, Keith was still ordering the vintage of Dom Perignon that Kit said was the best. But it went on, and with me it was more a sense of pushing me forward."

Richard Barnes: "Pete could meet Lambert and Stamp on their own intellectual level. Pete was solitary but he did like to bounce ideas off people. In our flat in Woodgrange Avenue he'd stay up all night talking about what the band meant, where it was going."

Indeed, it was Pete who had first become interested in the cult of mod, having become aware of the movement via a piece in The Sunday Times colour supplement in spring 1964, profiling a pill-popping boy-about-town called 'Denzil'. (Barnes remembers Townshend pinning the article on their kitchen wall.) These sharp, working-class boys lived and breathed clubs, pills, clothes, Italian scooters, and black American and Jamaican music.

Within weeks of the article appearing, The Who had teamed up with Pete Meaden, a swami of this 'modernist' scene (which had actually been bubbling away for two years), who rechristened the band The High Numbers and encouraged them to record a single called I'm The Face, his own reworking of Slim Harpo's Got Love If You Want It. Meaden famously expounded the chief tenet of mod as being "clean living under difficult circumstances"; the writer Nik Cohn preferred to describe these fastidiously dressed hipsters,

Rex

"JOHN LITERALLY NEVER UTTERED ONE WORD IN THE WHOLE YEAR I WORKED WITH THEM." SHEL TALMY

though not uncharitably, as "miserable, narcissistic little runts". I'm The Face was released on Fontana in summer 1964, but flopped, leaving the group susceptible to Lambert and Stamp's takeover bid.

Ensconced in opulent Belgravia, Pete found Kit an interesting and entertaining patron. "In those days the band was six people," contends Daltrey. "Kit had musical ideas and could guide and encourage Pete. He had that relationship with him where he could say *(affects upper-crust accent)*, 'That's fucking rubbish, Peter! Absolute fucking rubbish!'"

Townshend was surprised, however, to find young lads appearing at Kit's breakfast table, and even more surprised to hear Lambert's explanation for their presence: "This unfortunate boy had a terrible accident last night and hurt his foot, so I had to put him up for the night."

John Entwistle: "Kit was obviously gay, but we were used to being around unusual characters. He got on better with Pete, and was helping him along."

Initially, at least, Townshend's preferential treatment didn't have much immediate bearing on the band's day-to-day life. The Who carried on much as they had done for the previous year. Since the days of The High Numbers the band had never been short of live work, and after the Top 10 success of I Can't Explain in April 1965, their schedule grew ever more hectic as TV and radio appearances were added. A typical week in early 1965 would see the group supplement their Tuesday night Marquee slot with gigs at West London venues like the White Hart in Acton and the Goldhawk in Shepherd's Bush, plus overnight excursions to mod strongholds like Brighton, Portsmouth and the Midlands.

Richard Barnes: "I can't stress [enough] how hard they worked. But the point was that there were loads of bands who worked hard then, everybody back then was in a group of some kind. The big turning point was Pete blossoming as a writer. That's what changed everything."

The Who's first single, released in the UK on Decca imprint Brunswick, January 1965.

IT WAS WHILE THE Who were soundchecking at the Marquee in May 1965 that Townshend came up with an idea for a new song, an explosion of energy called Anyway Anyhow Anywhere. A terse, catchy pop tune, it was the follow-up single everyone had hoped for – yet its commercial potential was seemingly undermined by a revolutionary sound effect that had never appeared on a chart single before: piercing feedback.

For nearly a year, feedback had been an essential ingredient of The Who's live sound. When, in autumn 1964, Townshend and Moon had begun destroying their equipment at the end of each set, this "creative use of sonics" had been taken into a new dimension. With Pete becoming the owner of the first Marshall stack, from Jim Marshall's Hanwell shop, The Who became even louder.

Townshend: "I drifted into using bigger and bigger amps, and got into my dialogue with Jim Marshall. Bigger, more powerful, more distorted, more potent."

Daltrey: "Smashing up the guitar was just one element of it: the other was the noise. The sound was just terrifying. It was a total cacophony. Before Pete wrecked his guitar he would jam it in the speaker cone. The noise was unbelievable! Even when the guitar was in a million pieces, it would still be letting out this unearthly, squealing, primeval howl."

Encouraged by Lambert, Townshend intellectualised this on-stage violence as a form of 'auto-destructive' art, a concept he'd been exposed to at Ealing Art School via lectures by the artist Gustav Metzger. (Metzger had shown slides of acidic paint eating through metal plates and forming beautiful patterns. Later, he became a Who fan, coming to their shows.) Pete, drawing from his college background, appropriated the term 'Pop Art' to describe The Who's explosive audio-visual experience.

The Who recorded Anyway Anyhow Anywhere at IBC Studios in Portland Place where once again Shel Talmy was the producer. Talmy, a former American TV "quiz kid" prodigy who'd blagged a job producing The Bachelors on a visit to Britain in 1961, had already hit gold with The Kinks. Now he was looking to repeat his success with The Who. His first encounter with the group, however, had been fraught.

Entwistle: "When we turned up at the studio to record I Can't Explain, Jimmy Page was there. So were The Ivy League [session backing singers]. Shel Talmy wanted ➢

The good's gone: producer Shel Talmy (centre) at IBC, January 1966. "There was no fun at all."

Topfoto

◄ Jimmy Page to play lead guitar, but Townshend refused to lend him his 12-string Rickenbacker. So Page ended up playing the fuzzy drone chord on the B-side; then refused to lend Pete his fuzz box."

Talmy: "To me it was just work. I wasn't there to win popularity contests. I was out to make hit records, not hang out with the guys. They thought I was aloof and stand-offish, which was probably true. But if we'd been all-mates-together nothing would have been accomplished. Pete, for whatever reason, had two chips on his shoulder; to deal with him you just had to be twice as sarcastic as he was. Moon I was very good friends with. John never spoke and Daltrey I never connected with at all. Let's leave it at that."

Talmy didn't 'connect' with Kit Lambert, either: "There was a lot about him I didn't like. He was an outrageous gay, as everybody knows, hot after Townshend. I gather he was upper class – he was arrogant, definitely, and very annoying. The group banned him from the studio at one point."

"ROGER WAS NEVER THE LEADER, BECAUSE IF HE GOT VIOLENT WE'D GANG UP ON HIM. HE NEVER HIT ME – ONLY KEITH OR PETE." JOHN ENTWISTLE

For the new single, Talmy miked up the guitar amp "from three vastly different positions", in order to capture the screech of feedback in the middle-eight. For the drums he used around a dozen different mikes, instead of the customary three or four. Meanwhile, session player Nicky Hopkins was drafted in to add bluesy piano in the middle section. The result was a malevolent meeting of pop, blues and rock, topped off with a morse-coded guitar ending.

When Talmy sent the finished recording to Decca in the States they immediately cabled him back. Surely he'd made a mistake? These tapes had screeching guitar all over them…

IN A BBC RADIO INTERVIEW ON MAY 24, 1965, PETE Townshend was asked about The Who's latest single. "We were trying to achieve the sound that we get on-stage at present. I Can't Explain was written as a commercial number to introduce us to the chart. We want to get rid of all that and show what we really want to do." With the new sound came a new 'Pop Art' look: blousons were adorned with military paraphernalia – medals, sergeant's stripes, RAF roundels and badges – while Pete wore a suit jacket made from a union flag.

Daltrey: "Kit came up with the idea for that jacket – he should be posthumously knighted for it. Prior to that the Union Jack had only ever been flown on buildings as the national flag. When we walked into a Savile Row tailor and said, 'Will you make a jacket out of this?', they said, 'No.' They thought they'd go to jail."

Meanwhile, The Who ploughed on through a relentless schedule of one-night stands around the country. They even travelled to France where Entwistle and Moon, fast emerging as the professional hedonists in the group, polished off six phials of liquid methedrine between them and didn't sleep for four days. Entwistle: "Kit Lambert had to walk behind me and stop me from falling over."

The Who's pilled-up performances were perfected into a high art-form, but they were also swallowing up vast sums of money. Though they were often repairable, the imported Rickenbackers that Townshend was demolishing cost £200 a time, in an era when the average mod office boy in the audience was taking home £11 a week. Moon's drums were even more expensive to replace, though thankfully more robust. (In 1967 Townshend claimed they'd already been through £6,000 of gear – a phenomenal amount of money in those days.)

To plug the fiscal black hole, Lambert and Stamp were running a number of nefarious scams. Richard Barnes: "Because of Kit's family background and upper-class voice he could walk into virtually any bank in London and open a bank account, then demand an overdraft. They had the Royal Bank Of Scotland in Knightsbridge and the Midland in Sloane Square… we'd be borrowing money from anyone and anywhere."

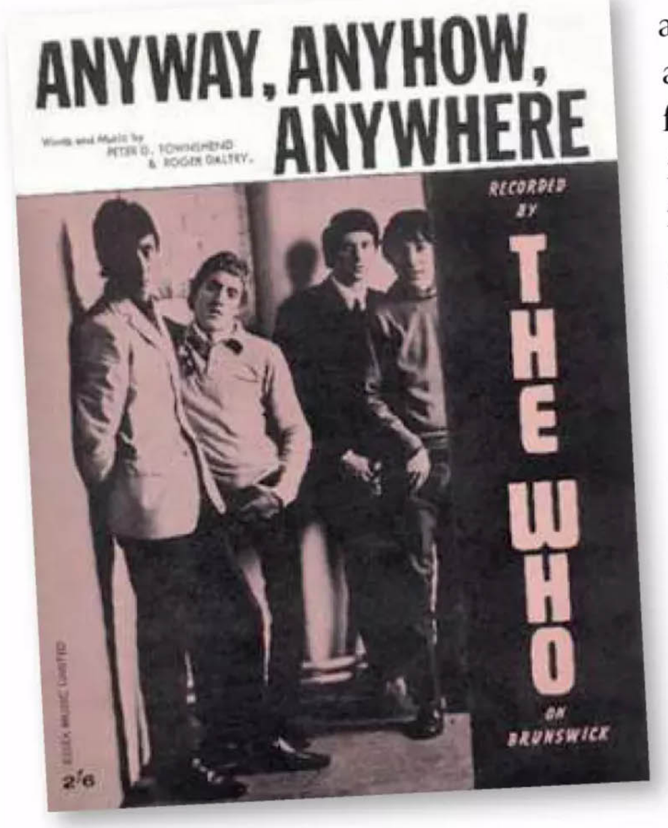
Daltrey: "Kit and Chris moved into Belgravia because they knew the upper-class system; they knew that Harrods never sued anyone for unpaid bills. So we lived off Harrods hampers and never paid for them."

When matters became really desperate, Kit would take to gambling. Entwistle: "I used to watch him do it at the Cromwellian in Earl's Court, which had this casino upstairs. I'd be there with my £20 wages and see him blow several hundred quid. Sometimes he'd actually win."

As Anyway Anyhow Anywhere began to take off, the media were becoming increasingly fascinated by what the band had to say for themselves – and especially Pete. In their days as an R&B covers group, Daltrey, as the frontman and teen heartthrob, was indisputably their unofficial leader. Though Roger had been co-credited for his lyrical contributions to the second single, it was Townshend who was chief songwriter, and growing interest in his ideas led to tensions: just as Brian Jones, the blues purist, was being marginalised by the Jagger-Richards partnership, so Daltrey, the impressive white-boy blues vocalist, seemed in danger of losing ground.

Richard Barnes: "Daltrey was the singer and in most bands the star is the vocalist. But Pete had all these ideas… Remember, art schools in the '60s were great places and ours was particularly strange. We did this course to break down all your preconceptions. It was exciting and

Maximum exposure: The Who during rehearsals for their first Ready, Steady, Go! appearance, January 1965.



stimulating; we were very privileged. So it was Roger's band at first, then Pete started to take control. Roger worked incredibly hard, driving the band around, making their guitars and equipment, but Pete had this strange kind of intuition. He went with odd ideas that happened to work. Roger had a more conventional logic."

Entwistle: "Roger was never the leader, because if he got violent we used to gang up on him. He never tried to hit me – it was always Keith or Pete, who as the writer obviously challenged his position."

Daltrey: "Was there any resentment about Pete? No. We were all happy to be getting our £20 a week. Anyway, where would The Who be without Pete Townshend's brilliant songs? Nowhere."

WHATEVER POWER DYNAMIC EXISTED WITHIN the band during the summer of 1965, one thing was for sure: differences within the quartet were growing. A punishing tour schedule and a taste of fame were taking their toll. As a band known for their violent bust-ups, The Who never seemed far from a flashpoint. An increasing source of friction was the group's prodigious drug intake – particularly their predilection for 'leapers'.

Pete, Keith and John were all partial to a few purple hearts – or any other variety of amphetamine-based pills – before they hit the stage, but Roger abstained because of the damaging effect they had on his throat. As their neverending tour ground on, Daltrey noticed The Who's performances deteriorating. Worse, Moon's merciless ribbing of Roger – called 'Dip' by the band, after the Dippity Doo hair-straightening product he used – was pushing him to meltdown point. Then there was the question of Roger's singing: essentially a blues/soul singer, he was feeling increasingly uncomfortable vocalising Pete's new pop-orientated songs.

On Sunday, September 26, the last night of a short Scandinavian tour, matters came to a head in ugly scenes of violence. The band were feeling drained and homesick: all that stood between them and the creature comforts of London was a two-show booking in Aarhus in Denmark. According to Dear Boy, Tony Fletcher's superlative Keith Moon biography, on the afternoon of the gig Keith wrote an unusually heartfelt letter to his girlfriend – and future wife – Kim. "I miss you so much I feel sick when someone suggests we go out," it read. "I'd rather write to you than go to a club." Even The Who's legendary wild man was getting road-weary.

Halfway through The Who's set that night, the hall exploded into a full-scale riot. The band returned to their dressing room where Daltrey vented his frustrations by flushing Moon's stash of pills down the toilet. ➢

Getty

Daltrey: "I thought, Fuck it, I've had enough. Moon went absolutely apeshit and came at me with a tambourine... I was heartbroken, I didn't want to fall out with him." By the time Entwistle and others pulled Daltrey off, Moon was barely conscious.

Daltrey: "I was slung out of the band there and then. I calmed down and was apologising for what I'd done. I had a terrible temper. I'm embarrassed to think about it now. I was horrible." On their return to England, the band honoured their outstanding engagements, but the general consensus was that The Who had run its course. "Kit was into forming a 'double' group," Townshend told Richard Barnes in 1982. "Keith on drums, John on bass, me on guitar, together with the band Paddy, Klaus & Gibson. That was Kit and I just groping for something to keep the band together."

Devastated by at the prospect of dismissal, Roger pleaded to be allowed to continue with the group. Eventually, Lambert and Stamp persuaded the others to give him another chance, pointing out that, as the public face of the group, he was by now indispensable.

Daltrey: "I said, Look, I promise not to fight any more. At that time, I didn't know any other way to articulate my feelings. I was brought up a lot rougher than them. Pete was middle class and so was John. I was this little guy, and the only way I could solve anything was to have it out there and then. I decided to learn to bite my lip. Moon, of course, had a field day. He made me this figure of fun and there was nothing I could do about it."

"I SAID, I PROMISE NOT TO FIGHT ANY MORE. MOON HAD A FIELD DAY, HE MADE ME A FIGURE OF FUN."

ROGER DALTREY

Entwistle: "There was a certain amount of pride swallowed. Roger promised not to hit us and we promised to behave."

Meanwhile, The Who were having other, more prosaic problems. Having taken delivery of brand new Vox amplifiers in a search for even greater volume, the band thought they ought to find a guard dog to protect them. While inquiring about an alsatian at Battersea Dogs Home, their van was stolen from the car park outside with all the gear in it.

Entwistle: "The police found it the next day, but not before we got another consignment from Vox. They all blew up in the end. We took them back to the Vox factory and piled them up outside in the rain. They never charged us for them."

AMID THE CHAOS, TOWNSHEND HAD MANAGED TO write a batch of new songs for the group's forthcoming debut album. The most striking of these had begun life as a slow, Jimmy Reed-ish 12-bar, which Lambert and Stamp didn't think much of. Speeded up, though, and with the addition of a couple of key changes, My Generation sprang into life. A powerful expression of anger and teenage disaffection, it seemed to sum up the hedonistic, narcissistic world of many British teenagers. Certainly, no one in recording history had thus far dared to tell the world to "f-f-f-fade away" or express a desire to die before they got old. The mad, jazzy bass solo wasn't too bad, either. Talmy: "I knew instantly it would be a hit. It was an absolute revelation. Everybody knew it."

In October, The Who returned to IBC to complete the *My Generation* album with Talmy. Taped in just two afternoons (Roger contends the band even played a gig on the first evening), the record contained seven Townshend originals, one studio jam (The Ox), plus covers of James Brown's I Don't Mind and Please Please Please and Bo Diddley's I'm A Man. Townshend even sings on one track, A Legal Matter, written about Roger's short-lived shotgun marriage. Decades after the fact, Talmy's artistic contribution to these early recordings is still in dispute. A quest for the truth is hindered somewhat by Talmy's dismissal as The Who's producer in early 1966, a matter which was eventually settled out of court to the producer's advantage – he won entitlement to five per cent royalties on all The Who's recordings for the next five years, which would include the mega-selling *Tommy*. The dispute has left enduring bitterness on both sides.

Talmy: "They wanted to get rid of me for personal and political reasons. Lambert had decided that I was having too much influence over 'his boys'. But I never produced anything but hits with them. I just received a letter one morning saying my services were no longer required. I didn't think that was a particularly nice thing."

When asked what he brought to The Who's sound, Talmy simply points to the dubious quality of The High Numbers single, and the comparative majesty of I Can't Explain. (Incidentally, he also "regrets never having the chance to record with The Who again".)

Entwistle's thoughts on the matter are mostly unprintable, except for his saying: "Talmy sat on his arse for one album. Anyone could have captured our sound then."

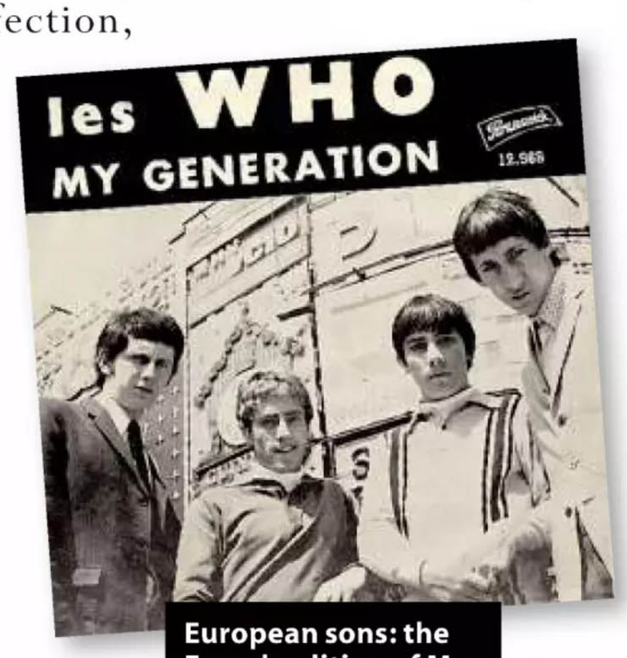
"Shel was partially sighted so he couldn't move around much," Pete explained. "He never used to get involved in rehearsals; he'd just show up at IBC, the band would walk in and he'd run the tape machine and never say anything. There was no fun at all. The only track I liked was The Ox, the free-for-all. Kit always got angry with him."

IN DECEMBER 1965, *MY GENERATION* CLIMBED TO UK Number 5, its namesake having peaked in the singles chart at Number 2. (The Carnival Is Over by The Seekers kept it off pole position, suggesting the youth revolution still had some way to go.) In the same month, the Italian film director Michelangelo Antonioni checked out The Who's pre-Christmas show at the Goldhawk, with a view to featuring them in his forthcoming movie, Blow-Up. In the event the gig went to The Yardbirds: their self-conscious attempt at auto-destruction suggests Antonioni made the wrong choice.

Antonioni's presence at the Goldhawk provided proof that The Who's fame was no longer limited to the London post-mod scene and had come to represent something truthful and important about the '60s youth revolution. From a standing start, The Who had in 12 months established themselves as songwriters on a par with the Stones, equals to The Kinks in terms of popularity, and a genuine threat in terms of creativity to The Beatles and their increasingly reflective music. Moreover, The Who's dark, disturbing, dysfunctional power-chord rock, played through the loudest amplifiers available, was to signal the future of rock'n'roll, from Jimi Hendrix to Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple and beyond.

Yet their metamorphosis hadn't come without a struggle. "Looking back, it was a miracle they even survived 1965," reflects Richard Barnes.

"But then again, if you think about what they went through in 1966..." M



European sons: the French edition of My Generation. "The song was a revelation," says Talmy.

Special thanks to Andy Neill, co-author with Matt Kent of Anyway Anyhow Anywhere: The Who's Complete Chronicle (Virgin), and Richard Barnes, author of Maximum R&B (Plexus).

Getty

Fly the flag: Townshend at the Bath Pavillion, October 10, 1966. "The tailor thought he'd be jailed for making a jacket from a Union Jack."

AT RICK DANKO'S HOUSE, WOODSTOCK, '69

"This was taken in the basement of Rick and his wife Grace's house on Chestnut Hill Road in Zena. This was the house they had after they left Big Pink, but its basement rehearsal room was actually more natural than the one at Big Pink. They fitted in well in Woodstock. It's a natural place – and there is a certain spiritual vibration that's connected to the earth. The Band weren't a newly born type of group, like the groups coming out of San Francisco at the time. They'd been playing together for six or seven years and had been through every dive bar in existence by the time I started photographing them."

LO AND BEHOLD!

Elliott Landy's photographs of The Band offer a unique, intimate record of the godfathers of Americana. His sumptuous new book, The Band Photographs 1968-69, evocatively turns back the clock to late-'60s Woodstock and a time when the "music was earthy and real".

(Above) **RICHARD MANUEL, CALIFORNIA, 1969**

"Richard was always shy, sweet and friendly. I still don't know exactly where this was taken. But I love that sign 'Keep Off Grass'. I think it was in California, while they were recording *The Band* album, and I think they'd gone to a studio that had some special audio equipment – maybe a lot of horns!"

(Top) **LEVON HELM AND ROBBIE ROBERTSON, WOODSTOCK, 1968**

"This was outside Richard and Garth's house. Levon and Robbie were two very different people. Robbie was the group's business spokesperson in all my dealings with them. He wasn't The Band's spokesperson, but he was the one I spoke to. Levon was always a downhome, friendly guy."

THE FIRST TIME ELLIOTT Landy photographed The Band was not a great success. It was 1968 and they were still Bob Dylan's backing group, performing at a Woody Guthrie Memorial Concert in New York's Carnegie Hall.

Landy blithely ignored the signs banning all photographers from the venue, and was soon challenged by Dylan's manager, Albert Grossman, who demanded the film from his camera. Landy had surreptitiously passed the film to his date, and slipped a new blank roll into his camera, which he then 'reluctantly' handed over.

There were no hard feelings. Grossman soon hired Landy to photograph Dylan's backing group when they went out on their own as The Band.

"Albert was big enough in his inner being not to hold a grudge and realise I was the right person to take the pictures," says Landy now.

Landy first heard The Band's music when they were mixing the song Chest Fever in a New York recording studio ("Just imagine hearing that at volume through studio-quality speakers").

The Band comprised five well-travelled musicians and distinct characters – Robbie Robertson, Rick Danko, Richard Manuel, Garth Hudson and Levon Helm. The group's music was steeped in blues, soul and country, and with a sound and image that was the antithesis of psychedelia they had a profound influence on The Beatles and Eric Clapton.

"The Band's music was real and earthy – and that's who they were," says Landy.

Elliot went on to photograph The Band in Woodstock, upstate New York for their *Music From Big Pink* debut in 1968, and in Woodstock and Los Angeles for their second self-titled album the following year.

The Band Photographs 1968-1969 features over 200 photos, many previously unpublished, selected by Landy from some 12,000 negatives. Financed by KickStarter, it's the highest-funded photographic book in the company's history, and is clearly a labour of love.

"I spent two years doing this book," says Landy. "Because I wanted to it to look exactly the way I wanted." ➢

SAUGERTIES DINER, NEW YORK, 1968

"I was a little shy and wouldn't step behind the counter to take this picture. It would have been nice if I had done, but it wasn't my counter to step behind. I remember it was a very small space and I had a wide-angle lens and stepped back as far as I could. It was difficult to get all four of them in the picture, which is why you can't quite see Richard."

LEVON HELM AND ROBBIE ROBERTSON, WOODSTOCK, 1968

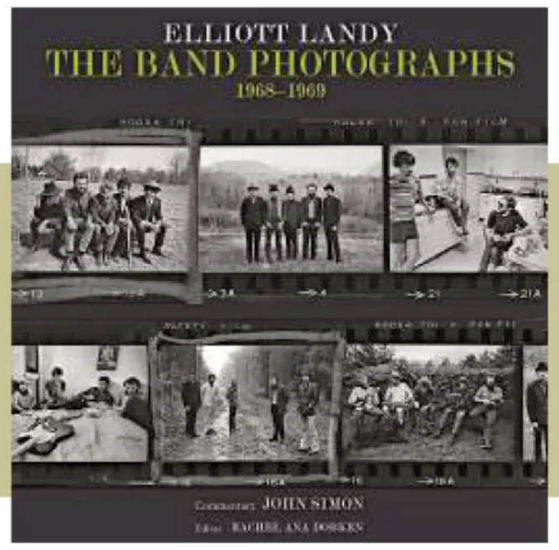
"Levon and Robbie smoking in Levon and Rick's house in Bearsville. We were just sitting there, and at the time I was looking for the right scenery to photograph them for *Music From Big Pink*. It had to have that Civil War/1860s look, and we'd driven all over Woodstock. But when I looked out the window in that living room I saw the perfect landscape right there in the backyard."

ROBBIE ROBERTSON AND RICK DANKO, LOCATION AND DATE UNKNOWN

"All I know is this wasn't taken in a studio. I guess it's at somebody's house. The thing with The Band is they always wanted natural photography. I had to fit around what they were doing at the time. I always found them all to be really wise in terms of seeing through people; you couldn't fool them. At the same time, though, they were always gracious and courteous. They had an inner awareness that it was important to be neighbourly."

THE BAND ON THE COUCH, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA, 1969

"I'm sure this was taken while we were on our way to wherever the photo of Richard with the 'Keep Off Grass' sign was taken. I spotted this couch by the side of the road – and it was too good to resist. So we turned around and parked up. There are others of Garth lying on the couch by himself. They were good times and they were good-time guys. Being around The Band was like being around five guys in the same family."



LOOK AT THE BAND

The Band Photographs 1968-1969 by Elliott Landy is published by Backbeat Books and available now. The book is 160 pages, 12x12 inches, hardcover and features more than 200 photographs documenting The Band during the time they made their first two albums, *Music From Big Pink* and *The Band*. More than half of the photos, drawn from Elliott's archive of more than 12,000 images, have never been published before. This book is a pictorial history of The Band few have ever seen. For more information and ordering details go to www.landyvision.com. Meanwhile, Proud Galleries will be hosting an exhibition of Landy's images from June 9 to July 24, 2016 at Proud Camden www.proud.co.uk

Heart & Soul

Abandoned by her alcoholic mother and infamous pool-shark father, hustling on the streets at 12, Etta James lived a life punctuated by self-destruction and "wrong-headed men". But a peerless voice would save her. By Lois Wilson.

IT'S OCTOBER 1960 AND 22-YEAR-old Etta James is in Chicago's Chess Records studio. She looks every bit the chola from the wrong side of town – her eyes are thick with kohl eyeliner, her mouth is daubed with red lipstick, her cheeks with thick rouge, her hair is dyed peroxide blonde, her arms covered in jailhouse tattoos. Her curvaceous figure is squeezed tight into a black cup dress, her legs are bare, and on her feet are cheap pumps. She smooths her dress down over her hips, leans into the microphone, takes a breath and sings.

"At last…" she begins, "…My love has come along, my lonely days are over, and life is like a song." Leonard Chess, the label boss who has brought James to the studio and who is seated to her right, jumps to his feet. The song's orchestral arranger Riley Hampton's mouth falls ajar. Etta knows she's doing well, but can't see the reaction.

THE INTENSITY AND DIRECTNESS OF HER performance come from within: here is a woman, abandoned by her parents as a child, who is lonely and desperate for love, falling for what she calls "wrong-headed men" and using drugs to dull the pain. At Last might not have been written for Etta James, but it sounds like a story designed to paint over, to obliterate, her unhappy past.

As the song comes to a close, the Chess house band are whooping, cheering. Etta throws her head back and laughs hard and loud. "Etta's crossed over! Etta's crossed over!" Leonard Chess runs round telling everyone in the building who will listen. And he's right. Released the following year, At Last will hit Number 2 in the US R&B chart and announce a new era for the singer, the label, for R&B itself. Etta James is a different kind of singer, one rooted in the church who ➢

Getty Images

Mother should know: James recording *Tell Mama* at Muscle Shoals studio, August 1967, with (from left) musicians Gene 'Bowlegs' Miller and Bill Foster, and producer Rick Hall.

"I joined gangs, stole, drank, smoked weed. I had to act tough because I was on my own." Etta James

✓ mixes blues hurt with jazz feeling to make spine-tingling soul. Leonard Chess returns to her side. "Etta, you're the queen of soul," he enthuses. Etta is still laughing. For a brief moment she feels whole.

James, born Jamesetta Hawkins in Los Angeles on January 25, 1938, was looking for love from day one. Her mother, Dorothy Hawkins, a 14-year-old groupie and jazz fan, put her daughter into the care of her landlady, 'Mama' Lu Rogers, when Etta was just six months old. Etta would meet the man she believed to be her father, the pool shark Minnesota Fats, just once. Given such a scenario, it was church, not family, that became integral to Etta's musical upbringing. Under the tutelage of Professor James Earle Hines, a five-year-old Etta sang Didn't It Rain and Move Up A Little Higher at her local baptist church. "The music was thunder and joy, lightning bolts of happiness and praise, foot-stomping, dance-shouting, good-feeling singing from the soul," she explained in her 1995 autobiography Rage To Survive. "I learned [to] sing like your life depends upon it."

After Mama Lu's death, Dorothy moved Etta, aged 12, to San Francisco. "I joined gangs, stole, drank, smoked weed," James told MOJO in 2005. "I had to act tough because [mother] never stayed home. I was on my own." At 14, she started The Creolettes, a harmony trio with sisters Jean and Abyssinia Mitchell; a year later they debuted with Roll With Me Henry, Etta's answer record to Hank Ballard And The Midnighters' recent R&B hit Work With Me Annie. Recording with R&B bandleader Johnny Otis for the Bihari brothers' Modern label, Etta, just 15, had to forge her mother's signature on the contract; Dorothy was incarcerated for prostitution at the time.

"When Etta James auditioned, she was shy, but she had an undeniable voice," Johnny Otis said in 2005. "I knew I had to record her. Once in the studio, she let go. She belted it out."

Otis dubbed his singer Etta James, and with The Creolettes' name changed to The Peaches and Roll With Me Henry rechristened The Wallflower due to the original title's sexual implication, James scored an R&B Number 1 in 1955.

It set the template for her Modern recordings where her sassy, raw vocals were pinned to punchy R&B. On signing to Chess in 1959 she showed another side. Leonard Chess, sensing her hard act was a mask covering vulnerability, placed her with arranger Riley Hampton and from 1960 to '64 they recorded a flawless string of Top 10 hits, including classics like All I Could Do Was Cry, Trust In

Getty Images

Me and At Last – beautiful orchestrated ballads built around melodramatic strings and vocals expressing sadness and desperation.

"Chess wanted a female superstar," says Leonard's son Marshall Chess, who was 17 when he met the label's new arrival. "Leonard signed her because of her strong voice, but it was only when he put her in the studio that he saw her full potential. He would really push her. He'd make her cry to get that emotion out of her. He knew that's what made her special and different, and he knew how to get that out."

Her early success couldn't last. Etta was out of control. Heroin had replaced dope and alcohol, and escaping reality, not making music, became her pressure valve. "She was hurting inside," says Marshall Chess. "She didn't have the luxury of going to a psychiatrist and figuring it out, so she took the best painkiller in the world. Before long, she was addicted."

There was a glamorous music tradition to uphold, too. "Billie Holiday did it, Charlie Parker did it, I did it too," she deadpanned.

Aside from a one-off hit with In The Basement, her soul duet with Sugar Pie DeSanto in 1966, Etta was adrift. The following year, when Leonard Chess took her to Muscle Shoals in Alabama to record at Fame Studios with producer Rick Hall, she had a criminal record for possession, was pregnant by an abusive boyfriend and on heroin.

RICK HALL, OWNER AND PRODUCER OF FAME Studios, has just heard James run through Tell Mama, the Clarence Carter song with which Hall had scored a hit with (as Tell Daddy) the previous year. "Etta! That's terrible! Don't do that, that's awful!"

It's the afternoon of August 24, 1967, and the second day of the first session of four, which will result in the 12 songs that make up the *Tell Mama* album. James, Leonard Chess, Hall and the Muscle Shoals rhythm section, including organist Spooner Oldham, bassist David Hood and drummer Roger Hawkins, are crammed into Studio A, where Hall recorded Wilson Pickett singing Land Of A 1,000 Dances and Mustang Sally for Atlantic Records and where Aretha Franklin sang I Never Loved A Man (The Way I Love You).

"It was the obvious thing to do with Etta James," Jerry Wexler, the Atlantic producer who'd taken Pickett and Franklin to Fame, told MOJO in 2006. "Aretha came to Fame studios and made the record that we all knew she could make but hadn't while she was at Columbia. Etta James had this amazing voice, this amazing phrasing, but she was no longer having the hit records she should have been. She just needed to be placed with the right musicians and the right producer and she'd be back. Leonard Chess knew that and with Rick Hall she came back."

It was Hall's idea to cover Tell Mama and, strumming an acoustic guitar, he hummed what he wanted Etta to sing. "He didn't care about hurting her feelings," says bassist Hood today. "He just wanted a hit record. He was always a tough disciplinarian, he led the session, he was the boss, he'd jump on you if you messed up, so you didn't want to mess up. That was his way."

Etta took Hall's behaviour in her stride. She was used to Leonard Chess making her cry. "I walked into Muscle Shoals, pregnant and cranky and ready to blow the doors off the studio," she wrote in her autobiography.

Spooner Oldham remembers differently. "She was always congenial. She was a hard worker, she never took her eye off the ball in the studio. We played the songs, she sung them. It was as simple as that. And she could really sing those songs."

"Everything just fell into place with Etta," says drummer Roger Hawkins. "And we had a lot of fun doing the record. It was a very warm feeling, we all got on real well. When it was time to do a song, she stepped up and sang it. There was no preparation on her part, she didn't rehearse, or need a lyric sheet. She was ready to go."

Oldham would make chord charts for each song and then arrangements were worked up in the studio. "There was no nine-to-five," says Hood. "We'd roll up in the morning then be told what we'd be recording that day. We'd listen to a demo of the song, or the songwriter would sit at the piano or play the song on the guitar. For Tell Mama we listened to Clarence Carter's Tell Daddy record. We all knew the song anyway and I started to replicate Tommy Cogbill's original bass line. I thought it was wonderful. But Rick said, 'Don't do that, play this.' He showed me what to do on my bass and I thought it was horrible. I argued with him but it was what he wanted. We went with his version."

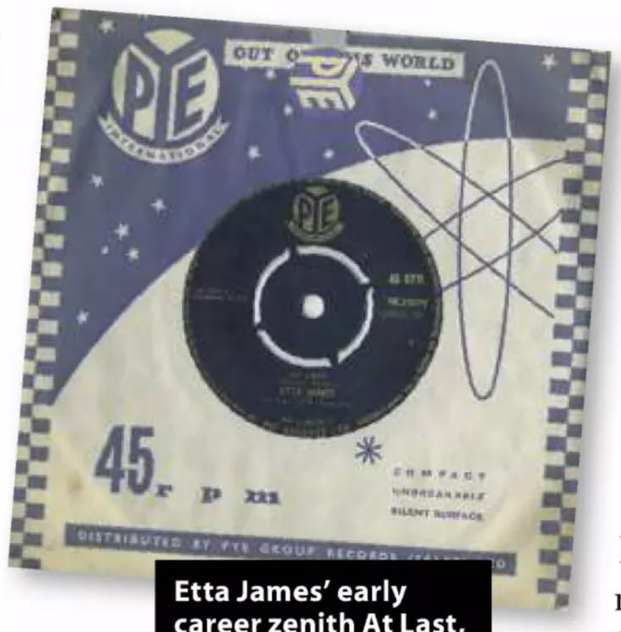
"Rick Hall could be abrasive," agrees Hawkins. "He'd turn round and say, 'Roger, your drums sound like shit,' but I look back now and think he was one of the greatest producers I worked with. He didn't know exactly what he wanted but he worked it out with everybody in the room and got the hit."

He got one with Tell Mama. The apotheosis of commanding Southern soul, it could have been Etta's statement of intent as she promises to comfort the heartbroken over defiant, blaring brass, bass, drums and guitars. Released as a single in 1967, it gave Etta her first US R&B Top 10 hit since 1964 and her highest pop place in America to this day when it reached Number 23.

The song's B-side, I'd Rather Go Blind, a tormented deep soul ballad driven by one of Etta's most emotionally naked vocal performances, was the only song Etta wrote for the album. It was created with her friend Ellington Jordan (aka Fugi) on the dayroom piano at Chino Prison, where he was an inmate.

"When Leonard heard the song he left the studio because he was crying and he didn't want me to see that," James told MOJO. "When he came back, he came up to me, took my hand and said, 'Etta, it's a mother… it's a mother.' I was proud that my song had touched him so much."

The remaining 10 songs, all mapping the human condition in love, are equally intimate and stirring, with Etta channelling her inner turmoil into a series of begging, pleading covers that read like autobiography. Security might have been written by Otis Redding, but Etta knew how it felt to live without it – when released as Tell Mama's follow-up it yielded another hit in 1968. Steal Away by Jimmy Hughes was a natural fit, too; Etta had experienced the dark end of the street many times. Her devastating renditions of Charles Chalmers' It Hurts Me So Much and Rosco Gordon's Just A Little Bit capture her heartbreaking sobs and the music in perfect rhythmic step. ➢



Etta James' early career zenith At Last, released in the UK on Pye International in April 1961.

"At the end of the sessions, when we heard the songs played back in the control room, I just thought, Wow, what a great singer," says Hawkins. "I didn't know she'd sung before. I didn't know At Last. If I'd heard that I'd have been too scared to go in the studio."

RELEASED ON AUGUST 21, 1968, *TELL MAMA* became the first Etta James album to chart, making the US R&B Top 30. It also ushered in a new era for blues-rock. Chicken Shack took I'd Rather Go Blind to Number 14 in the UK the following year; Rod Stewart would cover it in '72; and today it remains a standard reworked by everyone from Paul Weller to Beyoncé. "It really caught what Etta was all about," says David Hood. Aretha might have become the queen of soul but Etta was right up with her."

Despite this, James never had another hit single in the US and didn't have a US Top 30 album for a further 26 years. There were many reasons why; one was drugs.

"Aretha might have been the queen of soul but Etta was right up with her." David Hood, bassist

"She wasn't spinning magic a lot of nights. She'd do it to make money, but the drugs became the main part of her life, not her career," says Marshall Chess. On top of that, Chess wasn't geared towards selling her music to a white audience. "We couldn't reach that demographic, it was a problem," Chess adds.

And while rock musicians were aligning themselves to Etta's sock-it-to-'em approach, soul music was changing and the smoother, creamy sounds of Philly were starting to hit the airwaves. "People didn't want aggressive raw-nerve stuff any more," says Marshall.

Then, in 1969, Leonard Chess died. "He was Etta's security blanket, a paternal figure. He was always there for drug cures, medical problems, anything she needed," says Marshall.

Her drug intake escalated – heroin, methadone, then back to heroin – and it was affecting her performances in the studio. A session with Paul Simon in Sun Studios, Memphis with the Sun rhythm section ended badly. "Paul started teaching her a song he'd written for her," says Marshall Chess. "Etta had taken a mouthful of pills, then she fell asleep in the recording booth. Paul got mad and left Memphis."

Soon after, she and Artis Mills, a former soldier whom she married, were caught in San Antonio, Texas in possession of dope and drug paraphernalia. Mills shouldered the blame and was sentenced to 10 years.

Janis Joplin's death in 1970 also rocked Etta. Having recognised "a kindred spirit" in Joplin, she hooked up with Joplin's producer Gabriel Mekler to make a series of blues-rock albums, including 1974's powerful *Come A Little Closer*, recorded while Etta was in the San Fernando Valley's Tarzana Psychiatric Hospital trying to get clean. Part of the treatment involved her wearing a sign around her neck stating, "I'm Etta James and I'm a spoiled baby", while dressed in a nappy and a baby's bonnet.

Once out of hospital, Etta again succumbed to drugs, swapping heroin for cocaine. Later she would become addicted to codeine and balloon to almost 30 stone in weight.

It took her husband Artis Mills' return from prison in 1982 to shake her straight. With "an iron will" and her family around her, she went cold turkey. "I wanted my life back," she said in 2005. "I didn't want to think about scoring, I was tired of leading my life like that. I wanted to think about my family and my music."

Her rousing When The Saints Go Marching In at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics opening ceremony fanfared James's comeback. "That was the turning point," says Josh Sklair, her guitarist in 1984 and her musical director from 1988. "She got on the phone to the mayor Tom Bradley, saying as how she was from LA she should do it. From that we went from playing Vine Street Bar And Grill in Hollywood to Carnegie Hall to the Hollywood Bowl."

James also starred in the Chuck Berry 1987 film Hail! Hail! Rock'n'Roll, and such was her commitment to keeping clean that when she became reliant on codeine in 1988, she booked herself into the Betty Ford Clinic in Palm Springs. After she came out, her work-rate increased, averaging an album every year and a half.

"She loved to sing and play and record," says Sklair. "She knew what she wanted, she'd say, 'Play something crazy' or 'Play something funky', then she'd add her vocal, and she was never phoning it in. She would dig down deep somewhere and out that vocal would come. She'd do a take and pretty much nail it in one."

1994 saw her inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. 1995's *Mystery Lady*, her tribute to Billie Holiday, took her to Number 2 in the US jazz chart; 2003's *Let's Roll* landed her a Grammy for Best Contemporary Blues Album; 2004's *Blues To The Bone* received a Grammy for Best Traditional Blues Album.

Etta was no longer blues and soul's forgotten woman. Her direct, honest, put-it-all-out-there style chimed perfectly with the times – Solomon Burke's 2002 *Don't Give Up On Me* had reawakened ears to classic soul, and audiences were seeking musical authenticity in the wake of the onslaught of reality TV-spawned pop stars, many now plundering Etta's own songbook.

"We were unplugged, not trying to be primitive, but we just were," says Sklair. "At the same time Eric Clapton did his Robert Johnson covers album, so the climate was right. The blues and real music was in vogue and Etta fitted right in."

Her swansong, *The Dreamer*, recorded while she was suffering with leukaemia, was released just two months before her death from the illness on January 20, 2012. It hit the US Blues Number 2 spot, proving she still had fire in her belly and a dedicated audience.

Her last public appearance had been three years earlier on the US TV programme Dancing With The Stars. Twenty million people tuned in and saw the 71-year-old singer, elegantly dressed in black and perched on a chair, singing the song that had got her started.

"At last…" she sang, "My love has come along, my lonely days are over, and life is like a song." This time it was no cover story. James fought her illness to give an astonishing rendition, and with her husband Mills and her two sons Donto and Sametto watching on, Etta James felt whole again. Ⓜ

Getty Images

Gold Soul

Got *Tell Mama*? Get more of Etta's finest.

At Last!

Chess, 1961

Equally as important as Aretha Franklin's 1967 LP *I Never Loved A Man (The Way I Love You)* in the evolution of soul music, Etta's Chess debut sets an early benchmark on a series of intense orchestral ballads arranged by Riley Hampton.

Rocks The House

Argo, 1964

A storming live recording to rival James Brown's *Live At The Apollo*, 1964's *Rocks The House* sees Etta do just that with a raucous set taken from two nights at Nashville's New Era Club in 1963 with a band that really swings.

Call My Name

Cadet, 1967

Pre-empting the soul market's shift from 45s to LPs, *Call My Name* was conceived as a whole rather than as a mere collection of singles. Mature and accomplished, Etta is still rooted in the church on The Impressions' It's All Right.

Troubled soul: James in her iconic late '60s pomp. "I was tired of leading my life like that. I wanted my life back."

REVOLUT IN THE

The Beatles and psychedelia brought new artistic and social freedoms to Britain. But for many musicians and poets in late-'60s Brazil, the youth revolution meant torture, imprisonment, exile and even death. Will Hodgkinson tells the incredible story of the Tropicalists and their fight against a brutal political regime.

Freak Show: Os Mutantes (from left) Sérgio Dias, Rita Lee, Arnaldo Dias Baptista.

Photofest

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Voices of the people: Gilberto Gil and Os Mutantes, Festival Of Brazilian Popular Music, 1967.

ON JULY 5, 1969, THE DAY THE ROLLING Stones played their free concert in Hyde Park, a plane carrying two Brazilian musicians touched down at Heathrow. Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil knew of the Stones' music and the death just days before of their former guitarist, Brian Jones. But that wasn't the reason they'd been flown half-way across the world to London from their tropical homeland. As Brazil's very own young music rebels, Veloso and Gil had suffered far worse at the hands of their government than bêtes noires of the British establishment Jagger and Richards could ever imagine; and now they found themselves political exiles in this not-really-so-swinging, foreign land.

Gil and Veloso had been arrested six months earlier in January 1969, taken to a police station in São Paulo, and thrown into separate cells. No reasons were given. "They called at my house early in the morning, saying that they wanted to ask me some questions," remembers Caetano. "Then they took us to Rio and put us in solitary cells. I would sleep on the ground with nothing but a filthy blanket and my head next to the loo. The door was solid iron, and there was a little door at the bottom of it for the guards to put my food in. I thought I might be there for the rest of my life."

They were moved to another jail after a week, stayed for a month and were moved again. "I saw Gil only when we were being transferred," says Caetano. "We were not allowed to say a word to each other. I couldn't speak to anyone, listen to the radio, nothing. In two months, only the last 15 days were dedicated to any questioning."

Gil and Veloso, now worldwide stars, fared better than some of the other Tropicalists – as the musicians, artists, poets who made up the Brazilian counter-culture were called. Some were tortured; one never recovered from the treatment he had at the hands of the police; others went into hiding or gave up performing completely.

Tropicalia, the cultural phenomenon that blew through Brazil from 1967 to 1969, changed the country's music, attitudes and politics forever. A reaction against Brazil's military dictatorship and a puritanical left wing, it reflected the chaos of a violent time. Led by Veloso and Gil, Tropicalia's army was small but powerful. Included among its ranks were avant-garde songwriter Tom Zé, glamorous militant singer Gal Costa, Caetano's folk-singer sister Maria Bethânia, bossa nova diva Nara Leao, poet and lyricist Torquato Neto and a trio of irreverent, possibly insane, Beatles obsessives called Os Mutantes. The writer, musician and artist Rogerio Duarte was the movement's father figure.

In 1964 a US-endorsed military coup had brought to power the anti-communist general, Humberto Castelo Branco, the first in a long line of dictators: he dissolved congress, broke up the peasant leagues and trade unions, and suspended civil liberties. (US president Lyndon Johnson sent his "warmest wishes" within hours of the takeover.) When it came to music, the country's lush and soulful spirit continued to be reflected by bossa nova, samba and the elegant, acoustic traditions of the Northern state of Bahia and beyond. Rock'n'roll was strictly off limits: anything electrified or raucous was for foreigners – or the lower classes. What possible use could Brazil have for that bunch of louts from Liverpool?

Claudemiro/Acervo Uh/Folhapress

CAETANO AND GIL MET IN 1963. BOTH CAME FROM Bahia. "Neither of us were satisfied with popular music in Brazil," remembers Caetano, now a household name in Brazil. When MOJO met him in the early 2000s he was living in an apartment in Rio De Janeiro'sIpanema district that took up an entire floor of an Oscar Niemeyer-designed building, with a glass wall that looks out onto the beach. It was hard to imagine such a refined man languishing in some filthy jail cell. "Bossa nova had been a high achievement and João Gilberto was a monster of a talent, so the people who came after him tried to make music that lived up to it. Their goal was to show musical ability, to be openly left-wing and sound jazzy. It was all too peaceful, given that we were living in a violent climate."

Caetano and Gil had other musical plans. "With the international process of rock'n'roll led by The Beatles, we had a feeling that we should contribute by doing a similar thing in Brazil," says Gilberto Gil, who lived nearby. "We knew the time had come for a change in attitude. We had ideas, feelings, commitments, and a little bit of talent."

In 1965, a time when making music was becoming a political act in itself, Caetano and Gil moved to São Paulo. They joined the movement of musicians and artists animated as a reaction to an increasingly oppressive regime. "We got to know Vinicius de Morães, Chico Buarque, Baden Powell – all the respected people," says Gil, talking of the inheritors of bossa nova's refined mantle, who made acoustic music of a delicate, sophisticated hue. "We told them our ideas about bringing Brazilian music to an international level, and found resentment. They were negative to the idea of using rock'n'roll. So we got together a group of people who were prepared to try something new."

Caetano and Gil were inspired by the ideas of '20s modernist poet Oswald de Andrade, who had coined the term "musical cannibalism" – any aspect of culture, high or low, can be devoured, digested and spat out to create new forms of art. In 1966, Brazil's most popular star was Roberto Carlos, an Elvis Presley figure dismissed by the intelligentsia but adored by the masses. For Tropicalia, even Roberto Carlos could have his uses. "The attitude from the left was: we must fight against these Americanised, low-brow infidels," says Caetano. "We found this silly. We decided that all this 'garbage' should be invited to help express our violent sentiments, to create some instability, to feel this distortion of perspective that we were living in."

Tropicalia was announced to the world on October 1967, at TV Record's International Festival Of Song in São Paulo. The predominantly left-wing audience wasn't ready for the assault. 'Fine-tone' acoustic Brazilian music was all that the left approved of, and Caetano performed his electrically charged Alegria Alegria (Joy, Joy) to a chorus of boos. "We loved The Beatles, and The Beatles were anathema to the serious musicians," he remembers. "They were the devil. But when Gil first heard Strawberry Fields Forever he was obsessed with it. The criteria in Brazil was: is the harmony complex enough? But The Beatles' harmonies were simple and brilliant. We aimed for the same thing." The seeds had been sown: Tropicalia was born.

At the same festival, Gil played Domingo No Parque (Sunday In The Park), which, with arrangements from Rogerio Duprat, sounded like A Day In The Life if Lennon and McCartney had grown up with the sun, samba and sexual confidence of Bahia. He was backed by three teenage rockers dressed as witches and conquistadors who appeared to revel in the hatred they inspired. Os Mutantes – Sérgio Dias Baptista on guitar, his brother Arnaldo on bass, keyboards and vocals, their friend Rita Lee on flute and vocals, and in an unseen role, third brother Claudio on instrument-building duties – hacked into Brazilian culture with distorted guitars, theatrical costumes, and an extensive knowledge of the Fab Four's back catalogue.

"THEY PUT US IN SOLITARY CELLS. I THOUGHT I'D BE THERE FOR EVER."
CAETANO VELOSO

Introduced to Gil and Caetano through Rogerio Duprat ("He was our maestro, our George Martin," remembers Arnaldo), Os Mutantes were to become Tropicalia's most wayward faction, and one of the strangest, most innovative bands of all time.

"In our first gig with Gilberto Gil, the public's reaction was horrible," remembers Rita Lee. "Electric instruments were considered a sacrilege and a lot of tomatoes were thrown. But we stood there with our heads up having a blast."

The Baptista brothers came from a cultured background. "My mother, Clarisse Leite, is a classical piano player," says Arnaldo Baptista. "I believe she was the first woman in the world to write a piano-orchestra concerto. My father, César Dias Baptista, was a poet and a singer. They gave me a cultural shelter for my music." His brother Sérgio adds: "We were hanging out with the cats backstage at São Paulo's municipal theatre as children; we grew up watching our mother have one standing ovation after another. This was the seed that Mutantes grew from."

Into this rarefied milieu entered the three wayward boys. Sérgio Dias convinced his mother to let him leave school at 13. "I said to her, Listen. I don't want to go to school anymore. I'm a professional. I want to play my guitar. So she said, 'OK, you're a professional, fine. Earn your own money, because you won't get a penny from me.'"

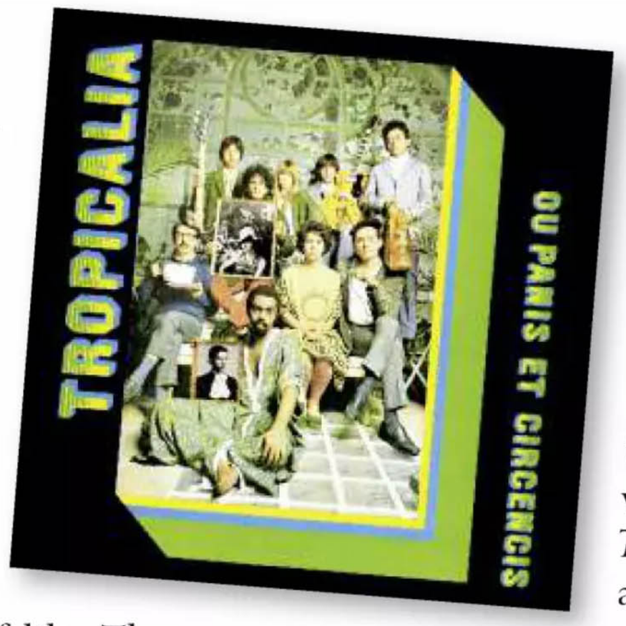
So he did. In 1964, when Claudio and Arnaldo played in early rock'n'roll covers band The Wooden Faces with their friend Rafael, Sérgio gave ➢

The great dictator: Brazilian president Humberto Castelo Branco, 1964.

Getty

The wild hippie diva: Gal Costa, 1969. "She stayed and tried to be resistant to the regime."

guitar lessons and played Ventures and Shadows songs. Meanwhile, blonde-haired Rita Lee was a part of all-female vocal group The Teenage Singers. Rita and Arnaldo met each other at a high school band contest, and joined forces as The Six-Sided Jets. Sérgio, then 14, nagged his brothers to let him join, and the band became The Six-Sided Rockers. After a few shuffles, Rita, Arnaldo and Sérgio found themselves left alone together, and Os Mutantes – The Mutants, a perfect description of three misfits – were born.

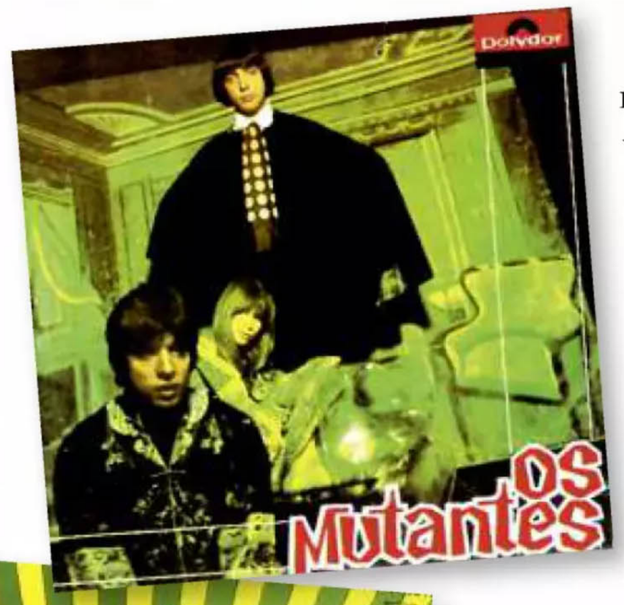


"The brothers were into instrumental stuff like The Ventures and Duane Eddy, and they had nice home-made gear," says Rita Lee. "So we got together. Our work ethic was anything at any time for any reason whatsoever, and our philosophy was not to have one."

Os Mutantes were a shock to everyone. Soon they were getting plenty of TV gigs, employed as the house band on a Shindig!-style programme called Square And Round and heading in a direction nobody had ever heard before – rock'n'roll distorted through effects machines, electronics, and a Latin sensibility and humour. Claudio built all the instruments, simply because Sérgio and Arnaldo couldn't cope with the sound of Brazilian ones. "We couldn't buy effects pedals or anything like that," says Sérgio, "so Claudio would study acoustic construction, then find a way of distorting my guitar using a pick-up for each string. I would have a sound in my head, he would discover a way to create it."

The band took to wearing wizards' outfits and alien costumes on stage. "We were always conscious of being different," says Sérgio. "And The Beatles looked different. Didn't you ever dress up as Batman? It feels good."

Another Tropicalist was equally adventurous with sound. Tom Zé used absolutely anything to make music, from hammers to typewriters to attacking audience members with a microphone stand. He met Caetano and Gil in Bahia in 1963. "Traditionally, Brazilian songs are about times and places long gone; mine were about the present," he says. "My first success, in 1957, was a song about a woman called Dona Maria. In our little village, Dona Maria was always the first sexual experience of the middle-class boys. She wasn't a prostitute, nor was she a civil servant, but she somehow assumed this vocation. She was like Artemis: she brought these boys into society through the language of sex. It was a rite of passage. When I made this song it quickly became a scandal. Everyone learnt how to sing it immediately."



AT THE END OF 1967, THE ALBUM *Tropicália Ou Panis Et Circensis* was released. Featuring the major Tropicalists, this group recording was the movement's manifesto, and its impact on Brazilian culture cannot be overestimated. Everyone knows this album, from old ladies in Bahian villages to young hombres in the Rio favelas. It is a mine of spiritual and artistic wealth, and it made the same kind of impact on Brazil as *Sgt. Pepper* did on its native culture. The title track, by Os Mutantes, rises in a crescendo before collapsing halfway through – as if the plug has been pulled on the record player – then takes off again. Gal Costa sang Caetano's Baby, which has the elegance of a perfect love song despite being a satire on consumerism. Tom Zé's Parque Industrial is an attack on Brazil's approach to industry, written at a time when social criticism was seen as a challenge to the dictatorship. *Tropicália Ou Panis...* was a declaration of intent and a call to arms. There would be a price to pay.

1968 was the year that politics in Brazil took a turn for the worse. In December '68, The International Act No 5 removed all human rights. General Emilio Garrastazu Medici came to power and made torture a routine part of the governing process. "The military hardliners took over," says Caetano. "They invaded homes without warrants. It was a response to the enormous strength of the street demonstrations against the government that we all attended."

Tropicalia had exploded and made Gil and Caetano famous, and they found themselves singled out as troublemakers. They were arrested and put in jail. The accusations against them, made during an inquisition by a colonel in Rio, were nonsense: that Caetano and Gil had burnt the Brazilian flag at a nightclub in Rio; that they had sung the national anthem using a string of obscenities. It seemed the real reason for their imprisonment was a mixture of protest songs, long hair and strange clothes.

"MILITARY HARDLINERS TOOK OVER. THEY INVADED OUR HOMES" CAETANO VELOSO

After two months in jail, they were taken by military plane to Salvador in Bahia where they were given to a colonel who was running the municipal police. They had to report once a day to the police station, they couldn't work, give interviews, make shows, or leave town. Neither was allowed to see his wife or family. "So Gil asked the colonel for some sort of solution," says Caetano. "The solution was to leave Brazil. They even put us on the plane."

In July 1969, Caetano and Gil arrived in London. They chose the city after being seduced by images of a swinging scene, but the reality wasn't quite as groovy as they hoped. "After Brazil it was a shock," admits Caetano. "Swinging London was really a minority of people, and the rest was traditional England. I found it far too sombre. I didn't like the buildings, or the rain or the fact that everyone was so polite. We wanted to go home." The years weren't entirely wasted – Gil made one album and Caetano made two, and the pair even sold out the Queen Elizabeth Hall in 1971 – but both were very homesick.

Then the incredible happened. In 1972 Brazil enjoyed what became known as the Economic Miracle – low inflation, an inflow of foreign capital, export promotion – and this led to political dialogue being encouraged for the first time since '64. Receiving word that they could safely return, Caetano and Gil were on the first plane home. "They said to us, 'Come back, but be quiet and don't cause trouble,'" remembers Gil. "We accepted the terms because we were homesick."

They came back to a changed world. Tropicalia had collapsed while its leaders

Getty

were exiled, only Gal Costa fought on. "Gal stayed and tried to be as resistant to the regime as she could afford to be," says Gilberto. "She made two intense, rebellious albums, bringing a rock'n'roll attitude to her work and being outspoken. When we came back she was our anchor."

Tom Zé kept a low profile and used irony and subterfuge to confuse potential oppressors. But he was effectively buried by the military's pulling apart of the Tropicalists. Throughout the '70s and the '80s, Zé disappeared entirely from public view.

Rogerio Duarte and Torquato Neto suffered the most. In 1969 Duarte was tortured by the military. His will broken by the process, he ended up in a psychiatric hospital, and spent most of the '70s and '80s living in seclusion in a Buddhist monastery in Santa Teresa, Bahia. Neto was also confined to a psychiatric hospital. He committed suicide in 1972.

Paradoxically, Os Mutantes entered their golden period. Their third album, 1970's *A Divina Comédia Ou Ando Meio Desligado*, is a masterpiece of poignancy and comedy – one song, Meu Refrigerador Nao Funciona, is a bluesy lament to a broken fridge, while Ave, Lucifer is a delicate ode to the prince of darkness. "Why not?" says Sérgio. "The Stones did Sympathy For The Devil." Adds Rita Lee: "Brazil is a Catholic country and we loved to break the rules." Strangely, the censors left them alone.

The back cover featured Rita in bed, naked, with Arnaldo and Sérgio, while a Nazi stormtrooper (Mutantes' drummer Ronaldo) looks over them, drinking a cup of tea. The front features a recreation of Dürer's Dante's Inferno, with Arnaldo rising naked out of a grave as Rita and Sérgio look on. "We dug the grave in our parents' garden then lit a fire in it. As for the back cover, well, that was my mother's bed. She was shocked."

The Mutantes' lifestyle was becoming extreme. LSD was ubiquitous, and it has left its mark: Sérgio Dias cannot remember if the greatest concert of Os Mutantes' career was in 1969 or 1970 (we think it was 1970). At the Casa Grande Theater in Rio, Os Mutantes staged Planet Of The Mutants, a 'happening' complete with a cinema showing close-ups of brain surgery and a sponge Incredible Hulk wandering around the auditorium.

"We were into theatrical stuff – surrealism mixed with lysergic poetry madness," remembers Rita Lee. "We would sing The Beatles' And I Love Her while throwing Tampaxes into the audience."

In 1970, Mutantes played gigs at the Paris Olympia. "I was a virgin at the time," says Sérgio Dias. "They took us to the Moulin Rouge and all those legs were too much for me. Good God! The record company arranged for this guy called Charles Homes to produce an album for us, but we didn't have any new songs, so we just re-did the old ones in English. I can't remember what happened to that one – I'm afraid I've taken too much acid." (*Tecnicolor* got its first release in 2000, after the long-lost tapes were unearthed.)

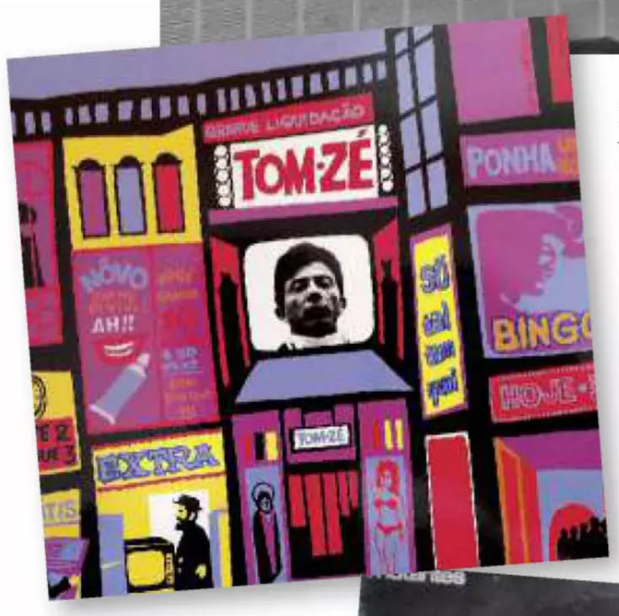
The band's return to Brazil marked the start of its collapse. "While we were in Paris, we were invited by the English record company to work in London," claims Sérgio. "Rita andArnaldo didn't tell me. I wanted to kill them! Can you imagine being in London in 1970? Instead we came back to Brazil in the middle of the revolution. No Caetano and Gil, no movement. We did a stupid TV programme that used canned laughter. Then Arnaldo went off for three months on his '51 BMW across America. Rita was really hurt, as Arnaldo was her guy."

IN 1971, RITA MADE HER FIRST solo album, *Build Up*: "We had a clash inside the band and I didn't want to wait for the guys to make up their minds, so when the record company gave me an invitation I didn't hesitate."

All of the band worked on the album apart from Sérgio: "I was very unhappy about *Build Up*. I would never consider doing an album by myself. I was a Mutante. Why the hell would I play on her album?"

Liberal quantities of LSD and the confusion brought about by the supposed liberation of free love further fragmented the band. Rita and Arnaldo married in December

Queen of bossa nova: Nara Leao, Rio De Janeiro, March 1963.



"WE DUG A GRAVE IN OUR PARENTS' GARDEN AND LIT A FIRE IN IT."
SERGIO DIAS

Getty

1971, on the day before Rita turned 24. Their marriage was over by the time she turned 25.

The 1971 album *Mutantes E Seus Cometas No Pais Do Baurets* had hinted at the band's Yes- influenced direction. But things reached a head after Arnaldo refused to let Rita play the Mini-Moog. "I didn't leave, they kicked me out!" she says. "The brothers were dabbling with prog rock while I wanted to maintain our musical sarcasm. But it seems that they didn't have too much success without me, hee hee…"

Arnaldo's drug intake (a trip a day, plus cocaine and mescaline by 1973) meant he was the next Mutante to go: "I decided to leave the group because of the transistor amplifiers that were used in the PA." Sérgio Dias: "The Beatles said, 'I am you and you are me and we are all together' – and that's the essence of LSD. Acid stops the timeline of the past and the future, so you just have the present. What's left? Your own wavelength. The self becomes everything."

In 1973, Arnaldo Baptista recorded his first solo album, *Loki?*. It's a brilliant evocation of the raw-wound emotion that only a man on the edge of sanity can evoke. Baptista claims that "during *Loki?* my frame of mind was towards mixing the styles of the group Yes [poetic] with the group West, Bruce And Laing [hard rock]." But it is more like *The Madcap Laughs*-era Syd Barrett with a Latin temperament. Sérgio Dias carried on the band in name only, as none of the three originals were talking to each other.

Arnaldo was in and out of mental institutions and sporadically releasing albums until the first day of 1982, when he jumped from the window of a hospital in São Paulo, trying to escape. He fractured his skull and was in a coma for the next two months, before making a slow recovery. He appeared in public for the first time in 2001, playing Give Peace A Chance to a rapt audience in Rio.

"To play live again was like rediscovering meaning," he says. "Nowadays most of my time is not totally connected with painting, because a painter can stop for a year and come back better afterwards. But if a musician stops exercising, he is nothing."

Sérgio and Arnaldo almost made their peace in 2000. Arnaldo, a firm believer in the superiority of Gibson guitars over Fenders, went to Sérgio's studio but spotted six Fenders lying around. For that reason alone, Arnaldo claimed that there's no way Os Mutantes are getting back together. (Kurt Cobain had tried and failed to get them to reunite for Nirvana's 1993 Brazilian tour.)

TOTALLY TROPICAL

Tropicalia's key players and how to hear them.

CAETANO VELOSO

A prolific singer and songwriter, Caetano has been through jail, exile and vilification to emerge as one of Brazil's most respected musicians.

Caetano Veloso *Universal import*

GILBERTO GIL

Guitarist/singer/songwriter Gil wrote the Tropicalist manifesto with Veloso. Now a political and cultural icon in Brazil.

Gilberto Gil *Universal import*

GAL COSTA

Tropicalia's wild hippy diva with a powerful torch song voice. Her commitment to freedom helped outline the movement's philosophy.

Fa-Tal-Gal A Todo Vapor *Phillips import*

ROGERIO DUPRAT

The movement's George Martin, Duprat provided the arrangements for all of the most important Tropicalia albums and introduced Os Mutantes to Caetano and Gil.

Tropicalia: Ou Panis Et Circensis (arranger) *Universal import*

TOM ZÉ

Classically trained musician who was invited by Caetano and Gil to join the burgeoning Tropicalist movement. Zé offered a very Brazilian take on the avant-garde.

Brazil Classics 4: The Best Of Tom Zé
Luaka Bop

MARIA BETHANIA

Caetano's sister was partially involved in the Tropicalist movement, bringing her sonorous voice to many of her brother's and Gil's compositions.

Tropicalia: Ou Panis Et Circensis (guest)
Universal import

ROGERIO DUARTE

A writer, musician and plastic artist who provided intellectual grounding for the movement.

No CDs available

OS MUTANTES

A brilliantly original and flamboyant Beatles-obsessed teen trio, Tropicalia's key rock bansd were:

Rita Lee Singer, flute and occasional mellotron player. Left the band in 1972.

Arnaldo Dias Baptista Bass and keyboard player, wayward genius, darling of Brazil's alternative scene.

Sérgio Dias Teen guitar prodigy, the only original member to remain with the band until their first split in 1978.

Claudio Dias Baptista The unseen "fourth Mutante", whose home-made instruments provided the band with their unique sound.

Os Mutantes
Polydor

However, against all expectations, time proved to be a great healer. Sérgio and Arnaldo reunited and put together a new version of Os Mutantes, minus Rita Lee, for a show at London's Barbican, followed by a tour in 2006 and an appearance at the Glastonbury Festival in 2010. To date, Os Mutantes have released two more studio albums: 2009's *Haih Or Amorteceda* (featuring guest Tom Zé) and 2013's *Fool Metal Jacket*.

Tom Zé's is one of the happiest stories from Tropicalia. Having been given up for dead, he was rediscovered in 1990 by David Byrne, who heard some of his music by chance and was knocked out. He promptly put him on the world map by releasing Zé's albums on Luaka Bop. "The people of the world will never understand how buried I was," said Zé, the day after a sold-out show at the Teatro Rival in Rio in February 2002. "Only an irresponsible international bandit like David Byrne could dig me out of my grave and make me a part of the musical pantheon again."

Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil returned from exile as conquering heroes, the darlings of the left. "They worshipped us as victims," says Caetano. "The hero worship lasted for maybe two weeks."

The new alternative scene expected something mind-blowing from Caetano's Rio show in '72, but the returning outlaw opened with a João Gilberto song and quoted Carmen Miranda. "It was disappointing for the hippies, the rockers, the left… everyone. But artists can't be purely political animals."

Caetano, Gil and Gal Costa went on to become national treasures. Tom Zé is held up as a great rediscovery; a long-lost eccentric uncle welcomed back into the fold. Meanwhile, Rogerio Duarte left the Buddhist community to live in Brasilia, but is no longer connected with music.

"I still consider myself to be a Tropicalist," says Gil. "We're finishing the work we started in the '60s. It's Brazilian music facing the world. Open eyes, open mind, an antenna that connects you to everything that's happening, and a blind faith attitude."

"As a movement, I considered Tropicalia dead the moment we went to jail," says Caetano, conversely. "But the motivations that led me to it still move me, although I'm not entirely satisfied with what we've been doing in the decades since then. In Tropicalia we created an environment that was open to variety, to plurality. I don't think any of us have matched that since." Ⓜ

With thanks to Silvio Essinger, Sérgio Dias, Arnaldo Baptista, Gideon Boulting, Gilda Marcus and Marcelo Froes.

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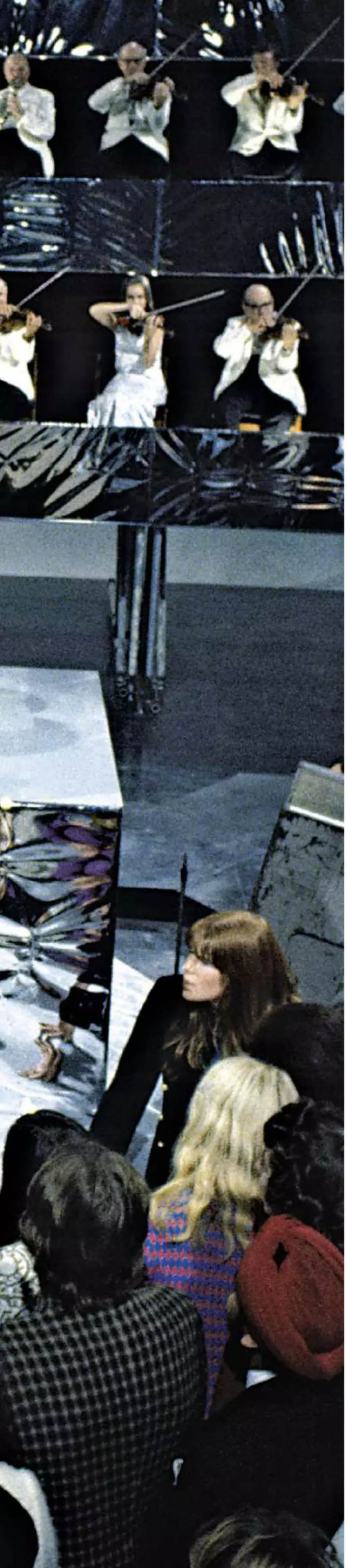
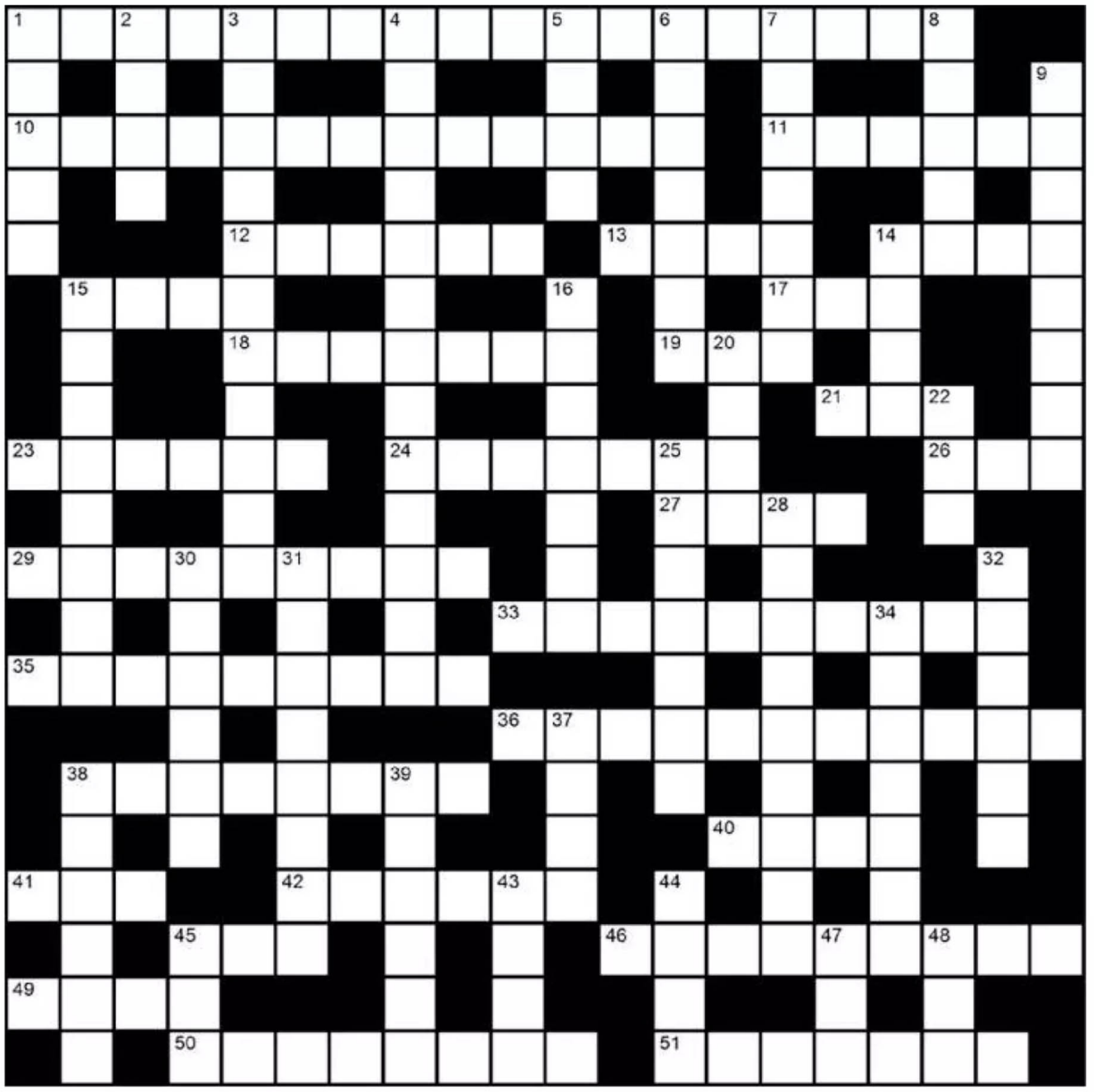
Please include your email address. The closing date for all entries is July 15, 2016. For the rules of the quiz, send an SAE to that same address.



Crossword COMPETITION



ACROSS

1 Trip that involved a Bedford VAL Panorama coach (7,7,4)
10 Song about the cheap pine furniture in Peter Asher's bedroom (9,4)
11 What Wings claimed to have had in 1978 (6)
12 Smith, the Beatles first sound engineer (6)
13 The Ballad Of John And ---- (1969 single) (4)
14 Life period mentioned amid *Sgt. Pepper*'s final track (1,3)
15 She held a huge lollipop and berated John at a fancy dress party promoting 1a (4)
17 McCartney album that contained Uncle Albert/Admiral Halsey (3)
18 Dovedale -------, the school George and John Lennon went to (7)
19 The ---, fittingly the last song recorded collectively by all four Beatles (3)
21 How many after 909? (3)
23 Live And --- --- (Paul McCartney) (3,3)
24 You're --------, a Number 1 single for Ringo (7)
26 Award made at Buckingham Palace in 1965 (1.1.1.)
27 Plug -- --, George's 1970 request (2,2)
29 The song that famously started out as Scrambled Eggs (9)
33 She became Mrs Starkey in 1965 (7,3)
35 Body parts found on Milk And Honey (4,5)
36 He married George's first wife (4,7)
38/41 Macca called it "the first ballad I impressed myself with." (3,1,4,3)
40 ---- She Sweet, Beatles cover, penned in 1927 (4)
41 See **38**
42 City which Ringo bade goodnight (6)
45 Eastman, Linda McCartney's father (3)
46 My ----- ----, the last Number 1 hit by a former Beatle (5,4)
49 ---- Gold, penned by Paul for *Ringo's Rotogravure* album (4)
50 Edwardian clad figure sung about on Paul's first solo album (5,3)
51 Oddly, this McCartney composition wasn't an instrumental (2,5)

DOWN

1 Borrowed by The Beatles from Barrett Strong (5)
2 That Rubber Soul female (4)
3 "Moonlight on the water, sunlight on my face" etc (John Lennon) (7,4)
4 Apparently, he sleeps in park and shaves in the dark (4,2,7)
5 Doris whose debut Apple album was produced by George Harrison (4)
6 Paul's floral speedway (3,4)
7 Unit of language on Rubber Soul (3,4)
8 The Day The World Gets ----- (George Harrison) (5)
9 It's the seventh track on Lennon's Imagine album (2,2,4)
14 - --- Like Me (Ringo Starr) (1,3)
15 The Beatles' very first UK hit (4,2,2)
16 Powell who became Mrs Lennon in 1962 (7)
20 Number of the Revolution that caused the "Paul is dead" rumour (4)
22 UK record company that owned Parlophone (1.1.1)
25 Geoff, influential recording engineer at Abbey Road (7)
28 Hit that displaced the Stones' Little Red Rooster at Number 1 in 1964 (1,4,4)
30 For which a ticket was required (2,4)
31 John Lennon song that became a Beatles release in 1995 (4,4)
32 British city where The Beatles played a gig at the Carfax Assembly Rooms in 1963 (6)
34 Label that first released *Meet The Beatles* in the USA (7)
37 The lovely meter-maid (4)
38 John once lived at 251 Menlove (6)
39 Label with which The Beatles had their first US Top 40 success (6)
43 Ringo's negative Hoyt Axton song (2,2)
44 Philadelphia-based record label that first released She Loves You in the States (4)
45 --- It Be (3)
47 Number of Virgins required for a 1968 album (3)
48 Description of the Brown Shoe that formed the B-side to 13 across (3)

© Apple Corps Ltd

Agnetha Fältskog

Jönköping, Sweden, 1968

One January afternoon in 1968, at a record shop in southern Sweden, 18-year-old Agnetha Fältskog puts in a promo appearance for her debut single, Jag Var Så Kär, which was Number 1 in the country's charts. Six years later, she would conquer Eurovision, and then the world, with Abba.

PA

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RONNIE SPECTOR

"I sang in John Lennon's ear and he fainted!"